

THE WHOLE
Critical WORKS
OF

Monsieur RAPIN,

In Two Volumes.

VOL. II.

CONTAINING

- I. His Reflections on *Eloquence* in General;
and particularly on that of the *Bar* and
Pulpit.
- II. His Reflections on *Aristotle's* Treatise of
Poesie; with a large Preface by Mr. *Rymer*.
- III. His Reflections upon *History*.
- IV. ---- Upon *Philosophy* in General.
- V. ---- Upon *Logick*.
- VI. ---- Upon *Morality*.
- VII. ---- Upon *Physicks*.
- VIII. ---- Upon *Metaphysicks*.
- IX. ---- Upon the *Use* of *Philosophy* in *Religion*.

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THE
 CRITICAL WORKS
 OF
 MONTESQUIEU, R. A. P. M.

In Two Volumes.

NO. II.

CONTAINING

- I. His Reflections on the Laws of the Romans in General; and particularly on that of the Law of the Romans.
- II. His Reflections on the Laws of the Romans in Particular.
- III. His Reflections on the Laws of the Romans in Particular.
- IV. --- Upon the Laws of the Romans in General.
- V. --- Upon the Laws of the Romans in Particular.
- VI. --- Upon the Laws of the Romans in Particular.
- VII. --- Upon the Laws of the Romans in Particular.
- VIII. --- Upon the Laws of the Romans in Particular.
- IX. --- Upon the Laws of the Romans in Particular.



Newly Translated into English by
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OF THE
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THE
Author's PREFACE
TO THE
Reflections on ELOQUENCE.

OF the several Subjects to be treated of in this Second Volume, there is none that I can better account for to the Publick, than this of Eloquence; being furnish'd with such admirable Memoirs from the Rhetorical Instructions of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian; whose Works in this kind are so exact, and their Pourtrait of Eloquence so just, and so accomplish'd, as to leave no Room for our Improvements, nor even for our Wishes. But in as much as they proceed by different Ways to their common End, which is Perswasion, it will not be improper to explain their particular Methods for the Information of those who shall apply themselves to the Art of Speaking; that every one may choose that Way which he finds best to comport with his own Genius.

Aristotle, who by his profound Judgment and great Capacity, dives farther into almost all Subjects, than all other Writers, has discours'd of Eloquence with the truest Accuracy and Strictness of Method. He divides his Work into three Books. In the First he comprizes whatever may seem essential to Rhetorick, its Nature and Definition, the Matter about which it is conversant, the End which it proposes, the Means which it employs in order to the Attainment of this

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End,

The Author's Preface to

End, which are, its Proofs or Arguments. From hence he passes on to the Division of Rhetorick into three kinds, the Deliberative, the Demonstrative, and the Judiciary. Each of these is subdivided into two Parts, the Deliberative into Exhortation and Dehortation, the Demonstrative into Praise and Dispraise, the Judiciary into Accusation and Defence. The End of the Deliberative kind is to shew what is useful and expedient, and what is not; as also to debate whether a Profitable Good ought to be preferr'd to an Honest or Moral Good, or a small Good to a greater. The Demonstrative kind is exercised in the praising of Vertue, and the dispraising of Vice: And here the Author enters upon a large Enquiry concerning the proper Subjects of Praise and Dispraise. The Use of the Judiciary kind is to supply us with offensive or defensive Weapons, for the attacking of others, or the securing of our selves.

In the Second Book he delivers the true Knowledge of Humane Nature, by his curious Descriptions of the Manners and Passions, which are the shortest and surest Ways that lead to the Heart of Man. In this consists all the Art and Method of his Second Book, and indeed all the Force, and the very Life of Eloquence.

In the Third Book, he explains the Nature of Discourse, as compos'd of Diction and Elocution. Here he distinguishes the several Species of Orations, and their several Parts, in regard to the choice of Reasonings, the use of Figures, and the well-ranging of Sentences. And tho' his Design be admirable as propos'd in general, it is still more wonderful, as executed in particular. The whole is truly a Master-piece, in which the several Lines and Features meet with exact proportion in the finish'd Draught. For this great Man, who had as perfect a Comprehension of Eloquence, as of Nature, has
shewn

shewn the utmost reach of Genius in his Explanations.

Cicero in his Oratorical Treatises is not so Methodical as Aristotle, but more elegant and polite, which is his inseparable Character. We must own him to be always solid; but then he is not always the most regular, as aiming rather to please than to instruct. Not but that upon strict Attention and a closer View, we may discover a secret Order and Method which he has very faithfully observ'd. But he is not willing that all the World should be acquainted with his Method. The Rules he follows, are such as the Learned only can distinguish, and such as he makes use of only to guard his Discourse from that Dryness, and that Incoherency to which an Author must expose himself, who undertakes to reduce Things to Art, and Principles, which have not hitherto been brought under the same Confinement. All which he has perform'd with that Order and Grace, that we may affirm there's no Author from whom a Man may gather so much Fruit and Benefit, so much Politeness and Elegance, so much Solidity and good Sense, as from Cicero. In which regard we cannot but applaud the happy Fate of Eloquence, that he who carry'd it to its highest Perfection in Practice, should at the same time adorn it with his Precepts.

He had in his younger Years, and for his own private Use, drawn some Sketches of this Art, which in his Maturity of Age and Judgment his Brother prevail'd with him to touch over and finish. The Sum of his three Books de Oratore, is as follows. At the Entrance of the first Book he demonstrates, that an Orator who would excel in his Profession, must be an universal Scholar; contrary to his Brother's Opinion, who thought a less extended Knowledge to be sufficient; and to that of Scævola, who maintain'd, that nothing more was necessary than to be skill'd in the Practice and Forms of the Bar. The

The Author's Preface to

Discourse which Crassus makes on this Argument (for the whole is written by way of Dialogue, and enrich'd with all the Graces of fine Conversation) is rather a Panegyrick upon Eloquence, to give us a noble Idea of it, than an Instruction to assist us in attaining to it.

In a word, his whole Business is to draw the Picture of an accomplish'd Orator. Having settled the End of Eloquence, he proceeds to distinguish its three Kinds, according to Aristotle; and observes, that the Judiciary Kind is wholly directed to Right and Equity, the Deliberative Kind to Profit, and the Demonstrative to Glory and Dignity. Hence he passes to the Division of Parts, and the universal Oeconomy of a Discourse; and descends to the several Rules that concern the Purity, the Perspicuity, the Ornaments and the Decorum of Speech. He concludes with the Laws of Pronunciation; and observes, that Things which depend most upon Nature may yet be improv'd and rectify'd by the Succours of Art. And upon this occasion he censures those who pretend that the Gift of Speaking is attain'd by meer Use and Exercise, not considering that Men learn to speak ill, only by speaking ill, that is, by speaking without due Preparation of Thought. For, says he, as much as Things that are digested by Study, excel those that are unpremeditated; so much Things committed to Writing excel those that are barely studied, or conceiv'd. He then enlarges upon the several Sciences that are necessary to supply an Orator with a good Stock of Sense; Eloquence being but a Trifle if not supported by such a Fund. These are the Springs from whence an Orator is to draw all his Streams; and this is the way that Crassus, in this First Book chalks out to Cotta and Sulpitius to lead them to a compleat Mastery in the Art of Speaking.

And because the same Gentlemen are urgent with him to explain his own Method, and to lay open the
My-

the Reflexions on Eloquence.

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Mystery of this whole Art, he engages Antonius to undertake it, who had compos'd a Tract to this purpose, and who accordingly enters upon the Subject in the Second Book. What he says, is much the same with that which Aristotle delivers in his second Book of Rhetorick, concerning the Knowledge of Humane Nature, and the entring into Man's Heart by the way of his Passions, Inclinations and Manners; which he describes with the utmost Advantage. He proceeds to the other Qualities necessary to accomplish an Orator: And then enters into the particular Description of the five Parts of an Oration, each of which he touches with very masterly Strokes. Here he recites in brief all that Train of Precepts which are wont to be dictated in the Schools of Rhetorick: And while he is expressing his Dislike of these, he falls at the same time into the almost infinite Variety of Court Business and Questions of Law: And tho' this may seem the driest and least entertaining Enquiry, in all the Compass of Eloquence, he has yet manag'd it agreeably, and like a Gentleman. In the same fine manner he points out the several Ways of establishing, or overthrowing, the Proofs and Arguments in Pleading, which he reduces under common Heads; and so leads those, who are born with a Talent for publick Speaking, to the true Source and Fountain of Oratory: Still artfully excusing himself, as not presuming to give Rules, but barely to deliver what he had learnt by Experience of Business, and Course of Years. In the last place he illustrates the pathetick Part, after a new Way, and with a different Turn from all other Authors; especially by his own Example in the Case of Norbanus and Cæpio, which he reports at large, and then teaches the Art of moving the Affections according to the Rules of Aristotle. After which he engages Cæsar, who is suppos'd to fall into the Company during this Conference, and who had the Reputation of surpassing all others in the Delicacy

and Fineness of Raillery, to speak of that Part as one of the brightest Ornaments of Discourse, when performed with Decency and good Grace. Caesar having ended this Task, Antonius returns to the Management of the four Branches of an Oration, the Exordium, the Narration, the Confirmation, and the Conclusion. He gives a summary View of the Rules of Panegyrick; and having explain'd the Invention and Disposition of Speech, he only adds a Word about Memory, and leaves Crassus to treat of Elocution.

Crassus, in the third Book undertakes this Part, and makes all the Secret of it to consist in two Things; first, in speaking finely, or ornamentally, so as to give Dignity to a Discourse; and secondly, in speaking agreeably to the Subject, by the Choice of Words, the Structure, Harmony and Cadence of Periods. There are, says he, two Kinds of Ornaments of Speech: The first Kind is diffus'd thro' the whole Body of an Oration, rendring it Noble and Majestick, fit to attract the publick Admiration, to strike the Heart, and move the Spirits: The second Kind arises from the Figures of Sense and Diction; which that they may look well, must always be set in their proper place. Upon this latter Kind depends the Art of Amplification and Diminution; to aggrandize or lessen Things, as there is occasion; which alone may challenge all the Grace and all the Power of Oratory, when skilfully perform'd. He proceeds to the Composition of Style, by the framing of the Expression, the Turn of Period, and all the Harmony of Speech, which must be adjusted, even to the Nicety of Syllables, that by charming the Ear, we may win and engage the Soul. He concludes with giving the Rules for Action, which he extols, not only as the principal and most important Part, but as the very Life and Spirit of true Eloquence. Thus by tracing Cicero in his Three Books, we shall find the Footsteps of the Three Books of Aristotle, without finding the same Dryness and Severity of Style.

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Style. And therefore I cannot come into the Sentiments of Angelus Politian, who in his Preface to Quintilian, takes upon him to censure the Rhetorical Pieces of Tully, as inaccurate, and immethodical. Whereas they have really a secret Thread, and a latent Method, which is therefore only laid out of sight, that this Artifice may render the Work more curious, and more agreeable.

I shall not stay to go thro' the other Pieces of this great Orator on the Subject of Eloquence. That which he addresses to Brutus, his particular Friend, and a great Admirer of this Art, is a List of the Grecian and Roman Orators, with an History of the Times in which they flourish'd, and an Account of their different Characters, the most instructive imaginable. That which is intitled Orator, and inscrib'd to the same Gentleman, is an Essay of the most excellent Manner of Speaking, and most perfect Kind of Eloquence, among that Multitude of great Masters who had signalized themselves in all Ages. The Topicks, the Partitions, the Books of Invention, and those inscrib'd to Herennius, are so many particular Tracts, chiefly fram'd to regulate the Disposition of common Places; but such as are not without their Beauty and their Use.

As for Quintilian, he has chosen a quite different Track, from that of Aristotle and Cicero. He takes his young Orator out of the very Cradle and the Arms of his Nurse, to train him up for the Bar, and to conduct him Step by Step thro' the several Parts of Knowledge that are necessary to his Profession. In the first Book he puts him into the Hands of a good Master, to form his Tongue by the initial Elements of Pronunciation and Grammar. In the Second he brings him to the publick Schools of Rhetorick, explains the Nature of this Study, with its several Parts, and their mutual Relation and Dependence. In the Third Book he enters upon the Subject of Elo-

cution, and pursues it to the End of the sixth. In the seventh Book he treats of the Disposition and Oeconomy of Discourse, which he carries on thro' the four Books that follow. In the twelfth and last, he describes all that belongs to the Person of an Orator; he gives the finishing Strokes to his Mind and his Behaviour, and invests him with all the good Qualities of a Man of Honour and Vertue. This is the short of Aristotle, Cicero and Quintilian in their several Methods.

But after all, if we would speak the Truth, we must confess, that whatever Advantage Eloquence may have receiv'd from the Instructions of so incomparable Masters, there is still less of Art than of Genius in it; and most Subjects that come into the Province of an Orator, are of such a kind, as to depend much more, in their Power and Efficacy, on the Opinion of the Hearers, than on the Knowledge and Capacity of the Speaker. We are to discourse before Assemblies where Ignorance has a large Majority: The Multitude indeed, is almost perpetually the Judge of Speech: And we find Men of all Professions, who really speak well, and have a Title to the Praise of Eloquence, tho' they are utter Strangers to its Rules. But still Art is serviceable in supplying the Defects of Genius; and he that would be compleat in Eloquence, must joyn the Improvements of the one to the Talents of the other; as I hope to make appear in the following Reflexions.

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REFLEXIONS
UPON THE
ELOQUENCE
OF THE
TIMES.
In GENERAL.

THOUGH true Eloquence bears a more absolute Empire, than either Authority, or Force, to which we commonly submit, no otherwise than in Decency, or by Constraint; yet this Empire, like others, is subject to Revolutions, and Decays, by means of certain evil Tastes, which from time to time, impose upon the World, and during the Imposition, pass for good. It was thus that Eloquence began to decline under *Tiberius* and his Successors; and the Fall of the *Roman* Polity, which was the most general Cause of the Ruin of this Art, did, soon after, so confound all the Ideas of it, that we are greatly at a loss in these our Days, to recover any Mark or Footstep of the Power which it exercis'd over the
Minds

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Minds of Men, and of which we see so many bright Characters in the Ages, and States, that once it govern'd. We are now no longer presented with those Miracles of Speech, those inimitable Compositions, which anciently appear'd in those happy Scenes where Eloquence flourish'd and reign'd. For where's now the Orator, that shall presume to command the Resolutions of his Audience? This fair Enchantress, and Universal Mistress of Hearts, has heretofore been seen to calm and allwage in a moment, a disturb'd and mutinous People: She has been seen, in the publick Deliberations of a confus'd Assembly, to make unhop'd for Impressions upon the most obstinate and prejudiced Spirits; to appease Seditions, by inspiring the Fearful with that Courage which she had taken away from the Insolent and Rebellious, and by constraining the one and the other blindly to follow her Directions: She has been seen in Camps and Armies, going from Rank to Rank, giving Life and Vigour to the Soldiery by the Mouth of successful Generals; and, at last, triumphing by the Arms of those whom she had first conquer'd by her Reasons. But we have little more than the Shadow left of that victorious Eloquence, and seem to possess it only in Notion: It may therefore be worth our while to enquire, what should be the Cause of this great Disparity, in an Age which lays such high Pretensions to Sense and Wit. Now the proper Reflexions that we ought to make upon this whole Subject, and in general upon the Eloquence of our Times, according to my Apprehension, are as follow.

Ingenii ipsius lumen Eloquencia. Cic.

I. *Aristotle,*

Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, and Longinus, whose Rhetorical Instructions are the most accomplished of all Antiquity, observe, that true Eloquence, such as was heretofore admired at *Athens and Rome,* while those two Republicks were yet in Possession of their Liberty, can only prevail among a Free People. They paint Her as a fierce and haughty Dame, that cannot stoop to Servitude or Flattery. And *Aristotle* pretends, that in *Sicily,* while under the Dominion of the Tyrants, all other Arts increas'd and flourish'd, and the Art of Speaking alone remain'd unfruitful. This is the Opinion of those Great Men, whom tho' we must allow to have been very competent Judges, yet they were such as might possibly be somewhat bias'd in favour of a Government under which they had receiv'd their Education. I cannot wholly come into their Sentiments: For Eloquence is secure of being crown'd in every Age and Country, where She has but a true Title, and has an Opportunity to make her Title be heard.

II.

As the Honours paid to this Art in *Greece,* recommended it to the Favour and Esteem of other Nations, and as it ow'd all its Success at *Rome,* to the glorious Recompences attending it in that State, so its Credit fail'd and sunk with its Encouragement and Reward. We are therefore not to wonder, if while the Fruit and Benefit of good Speaking is, at present, so very unequal to the Labour and Application that it demands, there should be so few rupt.

Aristoteles ait cum sublati in Sicilia tyrannis res privatae iudiciis reperiuntur, tum primum quod esset acuta gens illa, artem & precepta, Siculos conscripsisse. Cic. in Brut.

Sibi persuaserant neminem sine eloquentia, aut assequi posse in civitate, aut tueri, conspiciunt & eminentem locum. Dial. de Caus. Eloq. corrupt.

few Orators of Spirit enough to undergo the Fatigue, when not supported by any of those Hopes that are wont so powerfully to strike upon our Interest, and our Ambition. In the Countries which were once happy under its Sway, it was the Road to all Distinctions of Honour and Greatness; whereas in our Time it leads to no Prize, or scarce to any that is worth the seeking. This Discouragement alone is enough to extinguish all that Heat and Flame which should carry Men to the Study of Eloquence; to break the force of their Spirit, and with-hold them from any vigorous Efforts in this way.

III.

Sic sentio naturam primum ad dicendum vim asferre maximam.
Cicer. de Orat.
Nihil præcepta atque artes valent, nisi adjuvante natura.
Quintil.

The first Spring and Source of Eloquence is a natural Talent for Speaking, without which it is not possible to succeed, and with which it is almost impossible to miscarry: And the more rich and happy this Talent, the greater still the Success; for 'tis this that sets the distinguishing Value on an Orator, who is seldom great, but by the Greatness of his Genius. 'Tis this that does all in the Profession of Eloquence, and that entirely supplies it with its Ornament and Grace. And, again, there is no other Art, in which this Felicity of Nature shines so bright, or discloses it self with so much Pomp and Dignity. To which purpose, I cannot but set down those Words of the Poet, which so forcibly express its stately Air, and majestick Loftiness of Voice. But the true Greatness of Genius, so requisite to this sublime and sovereign Eloquence, is no more to be found amongst Men; it is the Gift of Heaven, and the Work of Ages. For besides

— Ipsaque per se Vociferatur, & lucet natura.
Lucret.

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besides this peculiar Happiness of Birth, the Combination of all those natural Qualities and Dispositions which are necessary to the Art of Speaking, is extremely rare. There must be a noble Elevation of Spirit, a Reach and Mastery of Sense, a Solidity of Judgment, to be improv'd and perfected by a Depth of Learning, and a compleat Experience of the World. Again, Cic. de there must be a great Extent of Memory, and Force of Imagination, a quick and easy Apprehension, a clear and distinct Elocution, a Countenance that has nothing disagreeable, a Pronunciation clean and lively, an Air of Authority, and many other Advantages, which being frequently incompatible with each other, do scarce ever meet in the same Person. 'Twas this engaged Cicero to complain, at a time so favourable to Eloquence, that there were scarce two Orators, of Note and Value, produced in any one Age. Not that the Thing is impossible at this time of Day, more than it was formerly. But Men seem either not intelligent enough to discover these Qualities in themselves, when they really have them, or not industrious enough to improve and cultivate them. And thus they may possess so many and great Advantages, without being the better for the Possession.

Linguae solutio, vocis sonus, latera, vires, conformatio quadam & figura totius oris & corporis.

Animi atque ingenii celeres quidam motus esse debent, ad excogitandum acuti, ad explicandum, orandum. que uberes, ad memoriam firmitatemque diuturni. Cic. de Orat. Cernimus vix singulis

lis aetatibus binos Oratores laudabiles exiisse. Idem.

IV.

No Man can excel in Oratory, unless to this natural Talent he farther adds a comprehensive Knowledge, and a severe Application. These were the three concurring Parts in the finish'd Eloquence of Brutus, which Tully so much admir'd and prais'd. Now, in this studious Confinement, and strict Conversation

Erat in Bruto natura admirabilis, exquisita doctrina, & industria singularis. Cic. de

with clar. Orat

*Multo labore, affi-
duo studio,
varia exerci-
tatione,
pluribus
experi-
mentis, al-
tissimâ pru-
dentiâ,
præsentis-
simo consi-
lio, constat
ars. dicen-
di. Quint.*

Petron.
Satyr.

with Books, so necessary to fill the Mind with the proper Treasures of Eloquence, we ought to go to the Fountains, and to take a thorough View of the Ancients, those especially who are Originals in this kind; and above all to make *Aristotle's* Rhetorick the continual Object of our Meditation. For 'tis here the Philosopher has so exactly described all the Motions of Man's Heart, the first thing that an Orator ought to study: We must begin with this, if we would reach the Soul of our Hearers by the way of their Affections, the true Springs of this Machine which is so very difficult to be moved. The Art of Eloquence, says *Tully*, must take in the whole Course of Civil Duties, must understand the Rise and Origin, the Force and Vertue, the Changes and Revolutions of all things; must be familiarly acquainted with Nature, as to what concerns the Life, and Manners, and Inclinations of Men; must extend its Power and Jurisdiction over the Laws and Customs of Nations, and the Government of States: In short, he maintains, that it ought to be ignorant of nothing, because it ought to speak of every Thing. And indeed, without a very considerable Stock of Learning, an Orator will not only be at a loss in deciding any Difficulty, but his Mind will be utterly incapable of any great and wise Production; agreeably to the Observation of the very judicious Critick, *Neque concipere, neque edere partum mens potest, nisi ingenti flumine literarum undata*; that is, without a large Capacity, and a Fund of good Sense, 'tis impossible to speak in a due Manner of all Subjects, and upon all Occasions. The Understanding, therefore, must be furnish'd with almost an immense and inexhaustible

haustible Store of Knowledge, by the help of indefatigable Study. For all the Variety of Words naturally flows from a Variety, and Abundance of Things: And how should we make others see while we are our selves in the Dark? Who is there now, that can support the Labour of so stubborn Application, so persevering Industry, as is necessary to an Orator, whose Knowledge must not be less than universal? But here we ought to remember that all this Diligence in the Pursuits of Art can prove effectual to those alone that have the Talents of Nature: Those who have them not, do but fatigue and torture themselves in vain with scholastick Rules. Nor can the Art of Speaking any more succeed to him that wants a Genius, than the Art of Singing to him that wants a Voice. Not but that a Man of a good Understanding, and of a well turn'd Head, may be capable of using the Advantage of Precepts, though his Genius be not altogether so particular and distinguish'd.

V.

True Eloquence being thus difficult in the Acquisition, Men have hop'd to recompence this Defect by the specious Appearance of a false Eloquence, such as was current in the *Greek* and *Roman* States, near the Time of their Dissolution, and owes its Existence to the Misfortunes and Servitude of those brave Nations. 'Twas with this Outside of Eloquence that the *Sophists*, whose Lives are written by *Philostratus* and *Eunapius*, laid themselves out, in publick, upon loose and empty Harangues; these Declaimers having scarce any other End but to astonish and amuse the People. But this
Eloquence

Eloquence being wholly unnatural, and being weaken'd and oppress'd by its fictitious Ornaments, all its Movements were wrong, it never touch'd the Heart, or made an Entry upon the Soul: All that it could perform, was to entertain the Sense with a thin and tasteless Pleasure, and to afford a Kind of Pastime to the Idle and Impertinent. But true Eloquence commands a Passage to the Heart, it strikes and alarms the Soul, and makes it sensible of its Approach. False Eloquence is but a Chime of Words, that tinkles in the Ear, but never reaches the Understanding. True Eloquence is strong, vigorous, and masculine, not taken up with Flourish and Gaiety, or solicitous of vain Embellishments. For none but Counterfeit Beauties stand in need of a borrow'd Complexion; Those that are genuine and natural carry their own Graces with them. But since we are universally liable to mistake the false for the true, because the former offers it self unsought for to the Mind, while the latter is not to be found but upon strict Search and Study; we ought not to be surpriz'd if the Appearance should pass with us for the Reality, in Eloquence, as in all Things besides. Upon the whole, a Man who has any Degree of Sagacity will observe, That there are few accomplish'd in this Profession, and that, generally, what we call a Talent in Oratory, is no more than a Warmth of Fancy, and a Volubility of Speech.

VI.

*Nulla res
tantum ad
dicendum
proficit,
quantum
scriptio.
Cic. in
Brut.*

In our Times, Men do not train themselves up to Eloquence, by that which is the surest, and was heretofore the most common Way of arriving

arriving at its height, the frequent use of Com- *Nulla res
position; in which they ought to labour with tantum ad
Assiduity and Constancy, if they would im- dicendum
prove it into a settled Habit. It was by this proficit,
means that Demosthenes and Cicero attained to quantum
those Degrees of Perfection, which every one scriptio.
sees and admires. Not to speak of the for- Cic. in
mer, who cloyster'd himself up so many Brut.
Years to learn his Art; 'tis well known of Caput est
the latter, that he employ'd all his Léisure quod mini-
and Vacation from Business, in rhetorical me faci-
Exercises; which gave him occasion to say, mus: est
that an Orator's best Master is his Style or enim mag-
Pen. ni laboris,
quod fugi-
mus, quam-
plurimum*

scribere. Idem de Orat.

Stylus optimus dicendi Magister. De Orat.

VII.

Men do not study to express Things accurately, or to draw the just Pourtraits of them: They are, for the most part, either deficient or redundant: The Medium, which ought always to be observ'd, is what they are seldom acquainted with; as being an imperceptible Point, and lying within the Nicety of a very few Rules, without which it is never to be hit. And as a skilful Painter knows how to give a different Air to the same Passion in various Subjects, so as not to express the Joy and Complacency of a Prince like that of a Valet, nor the Fierceness of a common Soldier like that of a General: So in the Motions of the Soul there are different Degrees, which an Orator should be able exactly to separate, that he may not confound and blend their Ideas; which Secret, after all, is not to be attain'd but by

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one that is Master of his Profession. The want of this Rule, so little known and practis'd, is the Reason that Eloquence, when not in Perfection, is wont frequently to lay its Colours, either too weak or too strong. 'Tis of great Importance, out of that multitude of Ideas which present themselves to the Fancy, to make a prudent Choice; without suffering our selves to be impos'd upon by false Appearances; which requires the most accurate Discernment, the justest Observation, and the finest Sense. We ought, especially, to consider, that in those Extremes, to which the Heat of Genius may possibly carry us, too much is always more disgusting than too little: That Verbosity can never move with so good Effect, as a sparing Sobriety of Speech; and that whatever is excessive, is, at the same time, less probable than the contrary. This is what the *Roman* Orator so often repeats in his Books of Rhetorick: For too much is an Evidence of Transport and Disorder, which are Faults; whereas too little is an Argument of Moderation and Reserve, which are always Virtues. To be short, whatever is disproportionate is as false in Eloquence, as it is in Morals.

*In omnibus
rebus vi-
dendum,
quatenus:
Etsi enim
suus cuiq;
modus est,
tamen ma-
gis offendit
nimium
quam pa-
rum. Cic.
de clar.
Orat.*

VIII.

After all, true Eloquence, which proceeds only upon Reality, consists in representing Things as they are. The most natural Turn of Speech is ever the most difficult; but then 'tis ever the most agreeable: Because this is an Art in which nothing but what is natural can please. And as the truest Penetration is to discern Things as they are in themselves, so
the

the truest Persuasion is to make them be discern'd by others, as they ought to be, by the proper Lights and Images of Eloquence. But in as much as Things are wont more forcibly to strike the Mind by their own immediate Presence, than by their Representations only, these Images, (which are no more than rhetorical Figures,) ought never to be brought into Play, but when they are stronger and larger than the Things themselves.

We ought so to study our own Genius, as that we may be able to follow it without Violence: But this we omit; either by affecting such a manner as is wholly unsuitable to our Genius; or by straining and forcing it, with too rigid Application; or lastly, by giving it either a greater Port, or a more refined Subtilty than it will bear. 'Twas thro' this Default, that the Athenian Eloquence began to degenerate from the Grandour which once it held under *Lysias*, *Eschines*, and *Demosthenes*; as *Tully* and *Quintilian* observe, upon Occasion of mentioning *Demetrius Phalereus*, who, they tell us, aim'd at a nicer Degree of Art, than his natural Capacity could sustain, and was more fond of Sweetness than of Strength.

Phalereus primus inclinasse Eloquentiam dicitur.

Quintil. Phalereus non tam armis quam palestra institutus.

Cic. in Brut.

Succus ille & sanguis incorruptus usque ad hanc aetatem oratorum fuit, in qua naturalis esset, non fucatus nitor. Id. *ibid.*

Suavis videri maluit, quam fortis, sed suavitate eâ qua perfunderet animos, non perfringeret. Id. *ibid.*

X.

Pronunciation, which is one of the most important Parts of Eloquence, is one of those

that are most neglected. It is this which brings down Eloquence to the Sense and Capacity of the Vulgar, by exterior Management and Address; and which has the Art of deceiving by Appearances, when it cannot move by real Effects. If the Virtue of this be so great as to make an Impression upon Mens Minds, in the fictitious and fabulous Subjects of the Stage, what must it make when applied to the truest Subjects, and the justest Occasions? And yet this noble Benefit is grown almost useless to those who speak in Publick, by reason of the little Care they take to attain, or improve it. Indeed, it seems chiefly to consist in a natural Ability; yet in case this be wanting, the Defect may be supplied by Application, and such an Application as depends rather upon Exercise than upon Art. The Eloquence of *Demosthenes* was rendered admirable by his Pronunciation; tho' he had no Talent of Nature in this Respect, and ow'd all his Success to the Constraint that he put upon himself. But because Men are commonly uneasy under such Constraints, and cannot bring themselves to support the necessary Fatigue of so laborious an Exercise, they lose the mighty Advantage which Elocution gives an Orator, by those passionate Expressions, and that living Language, which it inspires into his Eyes, his Countenance, and all his Mien and Behaviour, to make it self the better understood. 'Tis impossible to say how much this contributes to the animating of a Discourse. Nor is there any greater Obstacle to the common Effect and Power of Eloquence, than the neglect of this outward Deportment, in which every Failure is so much the more sensible, as the Delight which Men seek from Eloquence is more

nice

nice and delicate: For this being an Art, whose Business and Profession is to please, nothing can be more opposite to it, than what is harsh or disagreeable in Action. Among the Authors who have written on this Part, none has so fully evinced its great Importance, as *Quintilian* in the third Chapter of his eleventh Book, which seems the brightest Place in all his *Institutions*, and which alone is sufficient to shew the Use and Necessity of Pronunciation to an Orator.

XI.

Men that follow the Profession of speaking in Publick, are not careful enough as to the Use of Logick, either out of pure Negligence, in not learning its Rules; or thro' a natural Incapacity to put them in Practice; or lastly, by an evil Affectation of giving themselves no manner of trouble in this Affair. Tho' Logick may indeed seem deficient, as to Discourses of pure Ceremony, in which neither the Interests of State, nor those of Religion are concern'd; and which seldom rise to a higher Subject, than Fashion and Dress; yet is it the great Rule of Conversation, the universal Instrument of rational Speech. To discourse without this Instrument, is properly but to beat the Air, or to make a Sound without Sense: Nothing judicious, nor even tolerable can be utter'd, where its Assistance is wanting. And yet how many are there, that wholly decline, or abandon this Study? And how many Abuses and Extravagances are put upon it by those who would seem to practise it? either, by too streight and scholastick a Method; or by confus'd and embarrassing Terms; or by the

Notion they have entertain'd of certain false Reasonings, to supply the Place of true Reason, which can only be found in a clear, a just, and a penetrating Wit. This Character being so very rare, 'tis no Wonder that the Art of Oratory should appear thus maim'd and imperfect in the Generality of its Professors; because the Reasonings upon which they ground it, are either too dry and barren, or else too crude and immature, or sometimes merely false and sophistical. And, upon a close Examination of Things, it will be evident, that one of the most essential Defaults of modern Eloquence is the Want of a good Talent at Reasoning, of which there are but few that study to be Masters. Nor is this to be acquired so much by the philosophical Course in the University, as by the Reading of *Aristotle's* Rhetorick, and the frequent Converse with other good Books, which imprints on the Understanding a Solidity and Justness of Sense, not otherwise attainable. Good Sense, tho' many times purely the Gift of Nature, is yet often supplied by Books and Study. But then 'tis necessary that we distinguish with great Caution in this Matter: Because there are Books, which, instead of rectifying the Judgment, may corrupt and debauch it. Here, then, we ought to take the Advice of more skilful Persons, when we are not fit to be our own Counsellors; as very few are, especially of the younger Sort, whose Head is not yet settled by Experience and the Knowledge of the World. But let this be as it will, we may affirm, that Logick is the Ground-work of Eloquence; because 'tis that which first ranges in the Mind the perfect Analysis and Disposition of Things; which separates the Essentials of
any

any Subject from its Accidents; and which teaches the Method of rightly circumstantiating any Discourse. This is a Secret, which nothing but the Rules of Logick can indeed let us into. A Man is, in effect, an Orator, when he commences a Logician; because he then knows the full Extent and Series of Things, by a thorough View of the Circumstances with which they are cloathed. But tho' the want of Logick be one of the most common Defaults of our publick Speakers, yet we must acknowledge that 'tis one of the safest: Because none but Men of Parts and Judgment, who never make a Majority in the World, are capable of discovering it. Not but that the Multitude may well enough apprehend the natural Method of a Discourse, and may feel the Logick which they never learnt. But then their Sagacity does not reach so far, as to discern a Flaw in Reasoning, or a Failure in the Ordinance of a Design. In which Regard, we may suppose three Classes, or Orders of Judges; the first consisting of those who take up with bare Words, and are content to spend their whole Verdict on the Beauties, or Defects of Style: The second, of those who proceed to judge of the Thought and Invention; the third, of those who still go farther, and pass a Judgment, as well on the general Design, as on the Proportion, Symmetry, and Dependence of its Parts; which is the sole Privilege of the Learned and Intelligent. He must be very sharp-sighted that can spy out a logical Defect in an Oration. And, besides, there are some Orators, who, by surprizing their Audience with a certain Charm of Words and Thoughts, divert them from going to the Bottom of Things, or nicely canvassing what

they assert: As there are others, who prevent the like critical Examination, by the agreeable manner of their Gesture and Delivery. Yet, after all, there is a kind of minute and captious Logick, which *Quintilian* will not suffer in the Art of Eloquence; as serving only to enfeeble and emaciate, to exhaust the Life, and dry up the Blood of a Discourse.

XII.

Those who apply themselves to the Study of Eloquence, are wont too frequently to miscarry in it, by the false Measures which they take, either in respect of themselves, their Subject, or their Audience: And this Fault seems to be no less common, than that which we but now considered. An Orator of high and elevated Parts, sometimes loses himself by the too great Complacency which he takes in following his own Genius, without accommodating it to the Proportion of his Matter, and the Capacity of his Hearers. It is much easier for a Man thus to give the Reins to Fancy, and to be hurried away by the Impetuosity of his Genius, than it is to recollect and govern himself according to the present Circumstances and Occasions of Speaking: Because the one is purely the Effect of Imagination, whereas the other proceeds from strict Judgment, a Privilege much more rarely enjoy'd. No Wonder, therefore, if such as speak in Publick are so very liable to this Disorder: Whence arise those absurd Indecencies, and offensive Incongruities, so often to be found in their Harangues; as, the representing things beyond their natural Dimensions, and bigger

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bigger than the Life; the assuming an Air of Grandour in petty Affairs; the Affectation of lofty Expressions upon low Subjects; the Desire of surprizing the Multitude with the Bril- lancy of their Wit; the Pretence to Warmth and Passion, upon Subjects that won't bear them out in it; the astonishing and over-bear- ing weaker Auditors, by strong Periods, or profound Speculations. Eloquence forfeits its true Character, when its Lights and Graces do not prove commensurate to the Apprehensions of those to whom they are address'd: Because it can never gain an entrance into the Mind, but by the agreeableness of those Reasons in which it conveys it self. The Diversity of Ages and Sexes, of Fortunes and Conditions, of Abilities, whether natural or acquir'd, should oblige an Orator to different Manners, in compliance with these different Estates. Regard must be had to Time, Place, and Persons; or this Decorum, which is so necessary to good Speaking, can never be preserved. In conclusion, an Orator ought likewise to have regard to himself; he ought to consider his own Age, his Rank and Station in the World, the Opinion that Men entertain of his Abilities, his Stock of Credit and Authority: For all these Particulars will demand their just Weight and proper Influence on his Discourse.

XIII.

It is necessary we should know, in general, how to distinguish the various Characters of Eloquence, that we may apply them to Use, according to the Nature and Exigency of our Subject, and may never confound, or mis- place them: 'Tis impossible to be guilty of this

*Reser-
cognoscere
qui sunt
audienti-
um mar-
que publicæ
recepta
persuasio.
Quint.*

*Conditio-
ne tempo-
rum, ac di-
versitate
aurium,
formam o-
rationis
esse mutan-
dam. Dial.
de Orat.*

*U: guber-
natori ad
incursum
tempesta-
tum, sic a-
geni ad
varietatem
causarum
ratio mu-
tanda.
this Quint.*

*Tenuis causa, te-
nue dicen-
di filum
requirunt.* this Fault with Impunity; because Eloquence
is so nice an Art that it can bear nothing out
of Place and Season. The great and lofty Air
must be for great Places and great Assemblies,
Cic. Orat. for Multitude and Concourse. For the People
must be entertain'd with a Stateliness of Man-
ner, a Length and Copiousness of Speech, and
a Grandour of Expression. This Character
must likewise be applied to all noble or im-
portant Subjects; whereas Subjects of little
Weight or Dignity require a Style that is na-
tural, simple, and perspicuous. In Panegy-
rick the Style should be elevated and diffused:
*Oratio
poscitur
austera si
accuses,
fusa si lau-
des. Quin.* In Accusations it must be close and severe.
criminal Cases will not be treated of like Ci-
vil, nor grand Affairs like petty Concerns. In
short, as Eloquence must appear grave and
majestick on Points of State and Ceremony,
simple and modest on familiar, or instructive
Subjects, so it will arrive at its last Perfection,
if it has the Secret of rightly proportioning
Words to Things, and of preserving an Ele-
gance that is not studied, and an Exactness
that is not superstitious. In which respect,
*Loquendi
accurata
& sine
molestia
diligens
elegantia.
Cic. in
Brut.* there are two Extremes with the utmost Cau-
tion to be avoided, the frigid, and the boyish
Style: Of which the former renders a Dis-
course dry and insipid, by a Baseness and Lan-
guor of Expression; the latter renders it un-
grateful and shocking, by vain Tumor, and
affected Amplification.

XIV.

Tho' *Longinus* speaks of these two Styles
which we but now mentioned, as in some sort
coincident with each other; yet they seem ca-
pable of being thus distinguished: Those who
affect

affect the frigid Style, imploy great Expressions, when the Subject requires little; and those that affect the boyish Style, make use of little Expressions, when the Subject requires great. But our Language is become so modest, so reserved, and so scrupulous, as to reckon too strong, or too shining Expressions, too bold and hardy Metaphors, and too frequent Points, under the frigid Style; as under the Boyish, Humour and Pleasantry in serious Subjects, too loose and languishing Repetition in those Parts of a Discourse which ought to be compact and concise, too violent Exaggerations, and too laborious Figures.

XV.

'Tis impossible for any Man to succeed in the true Sublimity of Style, unless he be entirely persuaded, that he must owe this Sublimity rather to the Things of which he treats, to the noble Ideas which he forms of them, and to the Elevation of his Genius, than to the Boldness of Expression, or the Pomp and Splendor of Words, or the Equipage of far-fetch'd Circumlocutions. Whensoever the lofty Style ceases to be natural, it degenerates into the low and vulgar Character: For all its Support, and all its State, must be in it self. *Pindar* and *Sophocles* sometimes take so high a Flight, by the Advantage of their Noble Phrase, that the Reader is at a loss to follow them: But being unable to sustain this Elevation, (which cannot be natural, because 'tis not always in the Things themselves;) they sometimes again fall to the very Ground, and are no longer known to be the same Persons. This is a Fault which the World will never pardon:

*Oratio
sententiis
debet esse
ornatior
quàm ver-
bu.* Quint.

pardon : Because 'tis an Act of Presumption in any one, to affect a Shew of Greatness, when he wants the Reality, and to attempt to rise without Wings to bear him up. The true Secret, is to study a just Conception of Things, so as to use no other Words, but what are suited to the Dignity of the Subject. A great Subject will ever furnish out great Thoughts, and great Thoughts are naturally fruitful in great Expressions, and a Majestick Phrase. Again, it is highly important, not to carry Things by dint of Style farther than they will go ; for fear of a ridiculous Fall, after an extravagant Flight. 'Tis no easie Matter to get clear of these Extremes : The way of coming off from so daring an Effort ; so full and finish'd a Stroke, is scarce ever Natural. We very rarely excuse this kind of Hardiness, which gives too much Strength to that which is weak and feeble, and too much Height to that which is low and trivial. Men of exact Caution forbear sometimes to represent even Great Subjects in their full Dimensions, or to arm them with all their Force. But 'tis a nice Piece of Art to know how to make this Distinction without committing an Error : Because Men are generally inclin'd to pay larger Respects to their own Fancy, than to their Judgment.

XVI.

*Majori a-
nimo ag-
gredienda
est elo-
quentia,
quàm si toto*

corpore valet, ungues polire, & capillum reponere, ad suam curam pertinere non existimat. Quint.

nius's

nius's is their too scrupulous Care, and affected Diligence, in labouring more than they ought to finish some particular Pieces in their Work, of which they are more enamored than of others. 'Tis a manifest Indication of Little-ness of Spirit, for an Author thus to spend his Pains in adorning one Part only of his Subject, as not having Force enough to carry on a just and regular Design. Eloquence, which is the true Art of pleasing, never succeeds better, than when it imitates Nature: Nor can it be a good Method of Persuasion, to ascribe too much to the Succours of Art. As those who follow the latter way, certainly act upon a false Maxim; so by a childish Adherence to the Rules they learnt at School, they form to themselves a very dishonourable Idea of Eloquence. We need only consult *Agamemnon* in *Petronius*, to apprehend the ridiculous manner of this unnatural Eloquence, which mistakes external Ornaments for the most essential Beauties. It is in the Heart, in the Genius, in the Thoughts, says *Quintilian*, that Eloquence properly consists: Its true Source and Principle can be nothing but good Sense. And as good Sense is the most necessary Talent for a publick Speaker, and at the same time the most uncommon, no Wonder we should meet with so few accomplished Orators. Perfect Masters of Oratory are not to be formed but in happy Ages, and among People of exquisite Taste and Judgment, as heretofore at *Athens*, and at *Rome*.

Eloquen-
tia, sicut
reliquarum
rerum, fun-
damentum
sapientia.
Cic. Orat.
Petus est,
quod diser-
tum fuit.
Quint.

XVIII.

The Sovereign Art of Eloquence, is to adhere strictly to Nature, the first and great Original;

Original; which yet Men are little acquainted with, by reason of the little Care they take to follow her Steps, and observe her Conduct. 'Tis therefore of the utmost Necessity, to endeavour after a right Understanding of this great Pattern, and to examine all its Springs and Motions, by a profound Study of Philosophy, and a long Observation of Natural Things. For if a Man once goes astray from Nature, All is false and vain in Eloquence: Its warmest Passions have but a false Heat; its brightest Figures, but a false Lustre; its Force and Vehemence of Argument has nothing solid at the Bottom; it is but the Declamation of a Sophist, pure Fallacy and Delusion. Every one should be content to follow the easie Methods of his own Genius, without introducing so much of Subtlety and Refinement. For that Art which is too solicitous of hiding it self, is no less false, than that which too much labours to be seen. True Eloquence affects neither to appear, nor to lie conceal'd: It proceeds by its own Rules and Principles, without using so much Form and Ceremony: And true Art is never concern'd, either how to disguise, or how to display, too much of Art.

XVIII.

We find little or no Construction in the Discourses of most of our publick Speakers; thro' their want of Application to study the Grounds of their own Language. Those who have a Genius for Oratory, find it difficult for them to stoop to these little Cares, which are no less necessary than they ought to be exact: The natural Elevation of their Spirit, will

will not be subjected to these cautious Measures. And as for those who have not a Genius, they are dispos'd to the Fault of Affectation, in order to the making up with Words what they want in the Justness and Propriety of their Thoughts. At the same time 'tis certain, that good Speakers are the only Men that have a good Taste; and 'tis no less certain, that those only who have a good Taste are capable of being good Judges.

Cic. in Brut.

Dicere nemo bene potest, nisi qui prudenter intelligit. Id. *ibid.*

XIX.

The common Source of all that seems vicious in the Expression, which is so essential a Part of Eloquence, must be own'd to be the natural Fault of the Imagination. The Expression swells into a superfluous and vain Tide of Words, when the Imagination is too warm and sprightly; into far-fetch'd Flowers and obscure Conceits, when the Imagination is too wide and confus'd; and lastly, into Dryness and Languor, when the Imagination is too cold and unactive. Those who make use of the Quickness of their Imagination, to recompense the Slowness of their Judgment, speak much, but say little. I confess, I love a Discourse that affords some Exercise to the Thought, and imprints its Ideas so deep, as not to be defaced; and I prefer that Eloquence which thinks well, and expresses ill, to that which thinks ill, and expresses well.

XX.

Men are commonly defective in that just Temperament which ought to be used in mixing

ing Reason with Authority, Comparison and Similitude with Example and Induction. And when they actually imploy these great Instruments of Perswasion, they do not yet take care to range their Proofs in such a Manner as that their very Order shall give them a mutual Strength and Support. For stronger Reasons ought to succeed weaker, and those which are more solid to those which are less; that the Discourse may not only be able to sustain it self, but may rise, as it were by degrees, to its last Perfection. And this Point is of so great Consequence, that thro' the bare neglect of it, Reasons of very sufficient Strength and Solidity do yet often prove very ineffectual; because indeed they may be quite disabled for want of a due Proportion. And this Proportion consists in never speaking a weak Thing after we have spoken any Thing that is stronger. For the Reason which we urge last, is that which dwells longest upon the Minds of the Hearers, and ought therefore to be the most forcible and convincing. Besides this Disposition of Arguments, the Induction of Particulars will likewise require a judicious Management, to avoid the Indiscretion of multiplying to no purpose. So that an Orator will need that admirable Art which knows how with a generous Severity to prune off the Luxuriances, as well of Things as of Words; and to suppress too thick and frequent Ornaments, without paying any Deference to the Heat of Imagination, which would otherwise suffer it self to be carried away with a false Gaiety and Lustre, commonly void of all manly Beauties. Eloquence cannot rightly open her Stores, and successfully imploy the noble Treasures of her Art, without these Precautions;

— *Ambi-
tiosa reci-
det orna-
menta.*
Hor.

tions; which appear to be of the last Importance, in that they reduce Things to their natural Condition. And the only Reason why so necessary Rules are seldom practis'd, is, because they are little understood.

XXI.

Eloquence that amuses the Head, without *Phalerens*, affecting the Heart, does not deserve its Name. *non tam* Such was that of the *Grecian* Orator, mention'd by *Tully* in his *Brutus*; who always tickled and pleas'd, but never mov'd or inflam'd. This is a mere Lesson, and a Trial of Skill, the Use of which should be confin'd to the Schools. It is then that Eloquence exerts its Empire, when it appears in its native Majesty. Instead of filling the Eye with useless Wonders, it delivers a secret Ray into the Soul: It does not amaze with Prodigies, but it persuades by Reasons; and, insinuating it self by some imperceptible Conveyance into the Minds of the Hearers, it works upon them with so strong an Impression, that they seem to act, not so much by Judgment and Counsel, as by sudden Emotion and Impulse. Thus whatever Beauties recommend themselves to the Understanding, without making their Way to the Affections, are not true Beauties. For the Affections always yield to the Understanding, when they are once content to admit and hearken to its Reasons; and, therefore, they do not hearken to its Reasons, when they refuse to pay their Compliance. That great and noble Air, which *Longinus* teaches in his Treatise of the Sublimity of Style, is, by his own Confession, more proper to dazzle and confound, than to engage and to convince: Because it

D

does

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does not force a Passage into the Thoughts and Judgments of those whom it addresses. All great Expressions without great Thoughts to sustain them, may be resembled to Ships that ride without their lading: They float upon the Surface, and cannot poise themselves to a steady Course. . . .

Biopneus that a Head, without XXXIIII
Reflecting the Heart, does not deliver its

In General, that kind of Eloquence which is so scrupulous in the ranging of Words, and so nice in all that outward Varnish which sets a Gloss on the Expression, is scarce ever known to succeed. We are apt to entertain a Prejudice against whatever is thus strain'd and artificial. The great Orator, *Isocrates*, who seems to have propos'd no other Aim in his Writings but to Charm and Please, was really unfit for Business, and could never have appear'd with Advantage at the Bar, because his Manner was too refin'd. The same Manner was follow'd by those Sophists, whom *Socrates* rallies so very pleasantly in *Plato's Phædrus*. And *Longinus* blames the too great Artifice of *Hyperides*, in filling his Discourses with crowded Ornaments and lavish Beauties. 'Tis a great Perfection to know how to husband and manage these Ornaments, and to dispose them in their proper Place, when Necessity obliges us to use them. All the Art and Power of Eloquence turns against it self, if it be too bright and glaring: It presently becomes suspicious, and Men look upon it as a fine Snare laid to deceive them: Not to say, that whatever strikes the Mind, or the Senses, with too much vehemence, soon wearies and offends. In a Word, the Matter it self must be possess'd of a large

Cura verborum de-rogat affectibus sedem, & ubicunque ars ostentatur, veritas absesse videtur.
Quint.
Non ad iudiciorum certamen, sed ad voluptatem aurium scripserat Isocrates.
Cic. Orat.

Comextus virilis sit, nec circa flosculos occupatus.
Senec.
Quæque patient retia vitat avis.
Ovid.

a large Stock of natural Beauty, to be able to bear this ornamental Dress, which always looks ridiculous when bestow'd on petty Subjects: For there's no greater Contradiction to the Rules of Art, than to deck and garnish that which does not deserve its Attire: And 'tis no common Mastery in Eloquence rightly to apprehend, what ought, and what ought not, to be neglected. We greatly mistake, if we are fond of Nothing but what is gay and glittering; and shall find, by Experience, that what shines most in a Discourse, is commonly the greatest Cheat. And therefore all remote and foreign Metaphors, all nice Antitheses, and pompous Epithets, are not always the most consistent with good Sense. True Eloquence never dazles the Fancy, but insensibly works it self into the Soul. *Quædam etiam negligentia est diligens.* *Aristotle* *Cic.Orat.* *Topick 1.* has told us, that the most common and obvious Reasons are generally the most capable of moving: And the most natural Language, such as flows from a bare Desire of being understood, is certainly the truest and the best. Discourses that require the greatest Brightness of Wit, such as Panegyricks, and Funeral Orations, for the most part, owe their Success purely to the Grace with which they are deliver'd. This kind of Eloquence is little more than Shew and Flourish, which proposes to divert the Fancy without influencing the Heart, and seeks rather to please, than persuade. Indeed Panegyrick, which has not so strong Passions to excite, need not go farther than the Politeness of Language, the Compass of Matter, and the Variety of Figures: Because its whole Aim is to affect the Mind with the Memory, the Esteem, the Veneration, and Admiration of the Person commended.

XXIII.

It requires less Genius in Eloquence, to invent Things, than to range and dispose them: That agreeable Turn which must be given them 'ere they can be set in their right Place, costs much more, than the Trouble of conceiving them. For every rational Man is capable of Thinking rationally: But 'tis somewhat very peculiar, to cloath a Thought with those Graces which alone can render it charming, and attractive of Love, and Admiration. And 'tis in this that Eloquence consists: Not the Eloquence of Words, in which we are commonly too Skilful, but the Eloquence of Things, to which we are almost utter Strangers, which can rarely be taught, and which ought not to be hop'd for, but from a Felicity of Nature. We may apprehend the great Worth and Importance of this Advantage, by considering the wide Distance that we find between the same Things variously express'd. It is the Turn we give to what we say, that composes all its Beauty and Life: And tho' this fine Air is commonly the Result of a fine Genius, yet there are other Means by which it may be acquir'd, in defect of that; as by the frequent Exercise of Composition under a good Master, or with a judicious Friend; and by a familiar Converse with ancient Authors. 'Tis from these we are to learn the exact Justness and Propriety that form the Mind into this taking Character, which afterwards it imprints on all that it conceives, if it does not labour under a natural Incapacity. 'Tis a great and admirable Secret in Eloquence, to know how to make Use even of our own Defects,

fects, and to profit by our Imperfections: At which the Ambassador in *Tacitus* was an excellent Master, who disguis'd his Talent of Oratory under a pretended Timidity and Concern, and affected never to speak without trembling, because he always spoke better than other Men: And 'twas by this Art, that he sav'd his Country, when condemn'd to Wast and Pillage by *Vitellius*. I have known a Person at Court, of the same Character: Being conscious of his Superiority in Wit and Sense, he chose to conceal a Part of it under an habitual Lisp in his Speech; that by not putting out all himself, he might the better keep the Level of those with whom he treated, and might avoid the Mistrust and Jealousy of overtopping them. Thus he entred, without opposition, into the Hearts of his Hearers; and by the artful Address of shewing but little Abilities in what he said, he persuaded more effectually than those who were wont to shew the greatest.

XXIV.

There can be no true Eloquence, in the Judgment of *Cicero*, that does not gain Admiration. And there's nothing, according to the same Great Man, that so much contributes to the rendring of Eloquence admirable, as the just Pourtraits of the Manners, and regular Movements of the Passions. This cannot be duly practis'd without a perfect Acquaintance and Intimacy with the Heart of Man, which ought, therefore, to be the chief Study of an Orator, and his Master-piece of Knowledge. The Pictures he draws of the Manners can never be false or unresembling, when he

*Eloquē-
tiam, qua
admiratio-
nem non
habet, nul-
lam judi-
co. Cic. in*

thoroughly understands their Rule and Principle, which is the Heart; nor can he fail of successfully moving all the Springs of the Passions, when he knows their common Seat and Original, which is likewise the Heart. The little Care that Men take to sound this great Abyss, may be given as a general Reason, Why there are so few that signalize themselves in Oratory. Those who profess the Art of Speaking, would do well to reflect upon this. For, all Things consider'd, a Man is so far only Eloquent, as he knows the secret Folds and natural Turnings of the Heart, and can lay them open to publick View.

XXV.

The Character of a fine Speaker ought to be adorn'd with Gentility and Modesty. If Men once dispense with those Decencies that become a Person of Breeding, they are so far from keeping their Reputation, as to expose themselves to Contempt: Nor will any Man be heard with Patience, that does not speak with Civility. For the Publick, to which we apply our selves, demands our Respect, and requires some sort of Gravity in our Addresses. And, therefore, all low and trivial Phrases, all Proverbs that are grown too vulgar, all base and obsolete Terms, and whatsoever favours of too much Familiarity, or Buffoonry, should be left to the Comedians, and does by no means become a serious and popular Discourse, in which good Manners, and true Decorum ought to be the governing Qualities.

XXVI.

The evil Education of Youth, occasion'd by the Luxury, and Effeminacy, of the Age, (which are grown to a great Excess) by the Indulgence of Parents, by the Inexperience of Masters, and by the false Taste of the Generality of those with whom we converse: This evil Education, I say, is one of the most infallible Causes of the Scarcity of Orators, and the chief Barrier in the Way to Eloquence. Young Men are led by false Tracks, and wandering Paths, and by a vicious Method, which being corrupt in its very Principles, no wonder that its Event should be so inauspicious, and Consequences so unsuccessful.

XXVII.

Not but that, after all, there are some Sparks of Genius, that shine among the Orators of the present Age, and give them a just Claim to Reputation and Applause. But because an Eloquence which is purely Natural, can accomplish no great Design, without the Succours of Art, being commonly destitute of these Succours, either by the Force of wrong Principles, or through want of Industry and Labour, it does not bring it self into general Esteem, by those wonderful Effects which it must produce upon the Hearts of Men, if in its full Height and Vigour.

These are the Reflexions that may be pass'd on the Eloquence of our Times, consider'd in general, and on the chief Obstacles to its Success, when it has occasion to exert its Power: Let us now see what we are to

make on the Practice of Eloquence in particular; and on its own principal Kinds, the Eloquence of the Bar, and of the Pulpit: under which Heads we may consider the common Abuses, or Mistakes, in either respect, together with the most proper Means of avoiding them in both.

And that its extent should be so inauspicious, and its consequences so unsuccessful.

XXVII

Not but that, after all, there are some Sparks of Genius, that shine among the Clouds of the present Age, and give them a just Claim to Reputation and Applause. But because an Eloquence, which is purely Rational, cannot in this Age, be so well received, as it was in former Ages, being commonly attended with these Secrets, either by the Force of wrong Principles, or through want of Industry and Labour, it does not bring in the same Reward, as it once did. And therefore, it is now, more than ever, necessary, that we should produce upon the Heart of Man, its full Height and Vigour.

These are the Reflexions that may be made on the Eloquence of our Times, and which may serve to direct us in the future.

REFLEXIONS UPON THE ELOQUENCE OF THE BAR.

Eloquence in general, seems to be comprized under two Characters, one of which is conversant about the Interests of State, the other about those of Religion, so that the one may be styl'd Sacred, the other Profane, or Secular. But tho' the latter of these has a much wider Sphere than is commonly imagin'd, tho' it exercises its Powers in the Field as well as in the Cabinet; tho' it reigns in the Assemblies of States, and presides in the Councils of War, and commands in the Day of Battle, and has a larger Share in the Government of Kingdoms, and in the publick Ministry than the Ministers themselves; yet because in these privy Consultations, it is so secret and mysterious, that we cannot fully search out its Character, or regulate its Use; and because its only publick Appearance is at the Bar; I shall confine my Reflexions on the Use and Practice of it to this Place, which is its principal Seat: And, under this Limitation, my Thoughts concerning its present Estate are as follow.

I. In

I.

*Crudâ ad-
huc studia
in forum
propellunt,
& qui
pueri lu-
dunt in
Scholis, ri-
dentur in
foro. Pe-
tron,*

In the Profession of the Law scarce any Time is allotted to the Pursuits of Eloquence, but that of Mens first and youthful Studies; which, for the most part, are either too hasty, too confus'd, or too superficial. The *Greeks* and *Romans*, besides the great Advantages they had by the Strength of their Genius, and their natural Capacity for speaking, made the Study of Eloquence the Business of their Lives: They travell'd abroad to hear the most celebrated Masters, and pass'd a long Course of Exercise in forming themselves upon those great Models, whose Fame had drawn them from their Friends and Country: Nay, they scarce applied themselves to any Thing but what had some Affinity with, or bore some Aspect towards Eloquence. They bounded their Pleasure, their Hopes, their Fortune, and even their Ambition; within this Study, which was able to raise them to the highest Eminency of Honour and Greatness. Whereas the Youth of our Days, so much inferior in Genius, and Disposition, think, that the Reading of a Romance, or Comedy, may supply them with all the Eloquence necessary to the Bar.

II.

Gentlemen who want neither Parts nor Application, are not yet Masters of half the time that is requisite for the making and building up of an Orator. For besides the Civil, or *Roman* Law, in which they ought to be thoroughly vers'd, the Laws and Customs of their own Country alone

alone are of so vast an Extent, as not to be fully reach'd by the utmost Labour. Besides that we want those noble Encouragements which animated the *Greeks* and *Romans*: Among whom Eloquence seems therefore to have appear'd in all its Lustre, because it was the great Path to high Preferment, and even to sovereign Dominion.

III.

Should we suppose all the Qualifications, that are needful to the Figure and Glory of Pleading, to meet in the same Person, to be join'd with all the Perseverance, Assiduity, and Stubbornness of Application, and even to be supported by the Views of Ambition and Interest; yet still those little Forms and Peculiarities, to which he must condescend in the strict Rules of Practice, (so dark and obscure in many parts,) might be able to dry up his Vein of Wit, and to rob him of that Treasure of fine Sense, which alone could furnish out the Idea of a great and masterly Discourse. This is a Fault that should be guarded against by a timely Anticipation of the Study of Eloquence, and by giving a right Turn to the Genius, before it is let loose to the Barbarity of Court-Terms. And yet those who are most careful, find a great Difficulty in avoiding the Unhappiness of which we speak: The Mind being so corrupted and impoison'd with this evil Air, which it is under a necessity of drawing in for its daily Occasions.

IV.

*Cum isti
dicunt, non
modò à
coronâ,
quod ipsum
est misera-
bile; sed
etiam ab
advocatis
relinquun-
tur. Cic.
in Brut.*

*Subsellia
grandio-
rem & ple-
niorem vo-
cem deside-
rant. Id.
ibid.*

IV.
The Eloquence of the Bar is wont to pay too servile a Compliance to the various Humours in Language, and to those fantastick Modes which govern the Age, according to the different Tastes that successively prevail, and that corrupt the Style by disguising its native Beauty under false and far-fetch'd Ornaments. 'Twas thus it suffer'd it self, not many Years since, to be vainly embarrass'd with the long Periods of the *Port-Royal*, which were in vogue for some time, and which threatned its utter Ruin by a weak and unfinew'd length of Discourse. Indeed these had but a short Reign: The Fashion soon alter'd, and a better Taste succeeded. It must be confess'd the Eloquence which is proper for the Bar requires a copious and diffus'd Manner. Yet such a Cumber of Words has now lost its faculty of pleasing, and we are happily come again to a Love of what is real and solid. It is upon the same Principles, that I cannot but dislike the Use of too frequent Divisions in a Speech; because they seem to enervate and exhaust it, by abridging its natural Scope and Liberty.

V.

The too officious Care of being so just & so regular, in a Discourse, is sometimes dangerous: 'Tis what may prove an Inconvenience on both Sides, and be an equal Fatigue to the Speaker, and to the Hearer. If Men would avoid this Fault, they must not chain themselves down to a Resolution of saying nothing but what is strictly accurate, especially upon Subjects

Subjects that require another Sort of Attention than that which is given to the mere Harmony of Language and Elegance of Composition. It is a great Point for a Man constantly to maintain his Character; and to speak what always suits with his Genius, is in the highest Degree, essential to a good Speaker. Besides, these Gentlemen of Form and Ceremony, who deliver themselves with so nice a Circumspection, have seldom any Thing great and masculine. Their extreme Sollicitude to say Things with the utmost Propriety and Correctness, drains their good Parts, and leaves them not Stock enough to move the Hearts of their Audience, by rais'd Thoughts, and noble Expressions. Those trim Words, and those well-dress'd Periods, instead of exciting in the Soul the Affections that should naturally flow from a Discourse, only gratifie the Ear with a vain Chime of Numbers, which can never strike the Heart. And those who put such Constraints on our Language, expose it to the Peril of losing all its Force and Variety, by studying overmuch to preserve its Delicacy and Sweetness.

VI.

But there's an Extreme to be avoided on the other hand; and that is, too great a Negligence, as well in the Ornaments of Words, as in the Disposition and Order of Things. Men of establish'd Reputation, and long Experience at the Bar, are most subject to this Imperfection; which generally comes upon them after the Age of Forty, and after they have been settled in some good Employment: *Nec quia sit honesta pulcherrima rerum eloquentia, sed ad fœdum lucrum accingimur.* Quint.

ment: For about this time, they find a strange Propension towards the getting of an Estate. They give over the Beauties of Eloquence, because they have not leisure to pursue them; and, under the Weight of constant Business, seek an Ease and Relief in this Neglect; so that, unless they are very much upon their Guard, the Charms of Interest will overcome those of Glory and Ambition. Indeed if a Man has but a tolerable Genius, improv'd by Exercise, and aided by a fineness and dexterity of Management, he will make a meer Play and Diversion of the ordinary Occasions of Speaking: Yet still the extraordinary will require the utmost of his Art and Address; all the loftiness of Thought, and force of Words. For 'tis then he must win by Violence the Favour of a prejudic'd Judge; he must disarm an Adversary, in the midst of his Conquests; and by a surprizing Stroke, change the Judgment of the whole Assembly. This is truly a great Performance; and perhaps the noblest Effort that the Mind of Man is capable of making.

VII.

Yet there are some Occasions, on which Negligence is very pardonable, and where the Heat of a free Discourse, and a certain Vehemence of Spirit are more successful than the exactest Choice of Words, and than all the Embellishments of Art. The Difficulty is, to know and distinguish these Occasions; which if a Man has Force and Sagacity enough to do, he will easily get over such Scruples as may arise from some looser Parts of his Composition, which according to the Rules of true Judgment,

Judgment, ought to be left under this Freedom, and this neglected Air. Again, there are some particular Subjects, which make it necessary to abstain not only from all Pomp and Greatness, but likewise from all Intenseness of Study and Care. "I am most in Love, says Tully, with *Antonius, Scipio, and Lelius*, who "had the Way of persuading their Auditors, "without making so much Noise, without "using so violent Contention, and without being "carried into those strong Efforts, and "those tragical Exclamations to which *Galba* "is wont to give himself up, at all Adventures. Not but that some such kind of Violence may be serviceable, in certain Affairs: But 'tis by no means of constant and general Use.

VIII.

Besides, there are certain Manners peculiar to the Bar, which few Speakers apprehend, because they are not to be discover'd, without a great Penetration of Wit, and a strict Application to the ancient Standards of Eloquence. These are the prodigious Strokes of Art, which astonish the Bench, and work the most unexpected change of Mind and Opinion. Such was the politick Fetch of *Canus Rufus*, (so much applauded by *Cicero*) who being very briskly attack'd by his Accuser *Sisenna*, cried out to the Court, with a most passionate and moving Voice, *Circumvenior, judices, nisi sub-* in Brut.
venitis. This Confession of the Fear he was under of being surpriz'd, and this Address in begging the Protection of the Judges, had so strong an Influence as effectually to recommend him to their Favour.

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There are almost infinite Examples of the like Reach and Stratagem, in *Demosthenes* and *Tully*, occurring to those who are quicksighted enough to discern them. But we must observe that 'tis not a bright Sentence, or a sonorous Term, that can produce so wonderful Effects. But these sudden Turns of Eloquence subsist rather in the Things, than in the Words, and are of so inexplicable a Fineness, that none can describe their Beauty, or adjust their use. Men of good Intellectuals, and of a right Taste, are seldom mistaken about them. Again, upon some great and extraordinary Subjects, there is need of a Strain of Eloquence, like that Master-stroke of the famous Painter, who in a Draught of the Sacrifice of *Iphigenia*, cover'd *Agamemnon's* Face with a Veil, despairing to express the Grief of a Father, after he had, with so much Art and Strength, represented that of the other Friends. Of the same Character are those Expressions which *Cicero* requires upon Subjects of the last Consequence, and of which he says, *Significatio major erit quam Oratio*. Beauties of this kind, must be introduced with the nicest Management, and the most tender and pathetical Address, and by all the most elaborate Artifice, to give them the Success which they deserve to find.

Ibid.

IX.

Melior moderatio, & nonnunquam etiam patientia. Bonus altercator, vitio iracundie careat. Quint.

The good Opinion of the Judges, or the Favour of the Court, is best obtain'd by a known Integrity of Life, and a Reputation of eminent Probity; which 'tis much easier to shew, when 'tis true, than to counterfeit when it is not. And nothing indeed, has such a Power over the Minds of the Hearers, as the gene-

general Character of Vertue, supported by Modesty and Decency. A Discourse made up of Sweetness and Submission, is often more effectual than the greatest Strength of Argument: Because Men usually consider whether the Morals of an Orator be conformable to his Rhetorick; and whether he practises himself, what he recommends to others.

But nothing is more winning than the Temper and Moderation of a Pleader, in regard of those Circumstances which seem most dangerously to affect his own, or his Client's Interest. An Affair becomes suspected, when once managed with Heat and Transport.

Anger is a sure Prejudice against every Thing, even against Right and Truth, and Men will presume a Cause to be very much wanting in Justice, when it has recourse to Passion for it's Defence. As Moderation therefore is, of all Vertues, the most Skilful, in regulating the outward Port and Behaviour, so is it the most Pleasing and Agreeable; because it appears in the best Light, and Strikes with the greatest Advantage: Insomuch, that a Lawyer who rails at his Adversary, does but Expose and Ridicule himself, and he must entertain a very untoward Opinion of his Judges, if he imagines they can be diverted by his Spleen and Ill-nature.

X.

There's nothing more injurious to the Eloquence of the Bar, than that heap of common Places, with which our Lawyers are usually overcharg'd, and with which they crowd those long Prefaces in Pleading, that bear no Proportion to the other Parts of their Dis-

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course, and serve only to tire out the Patience of the Judges, and to give them a disgust to all that comes after, tho' possibly, Good and Commendable.

The younger Pleaders are most liable to this Error: They go about, because they have not Force enough to enter, by the nearest Way, into their Subject. It would be a considerable Piece of Service to them, if we could engage them to rid themselves of that Train and Fardel of Words that is such a Contradiction to good Sense, and so Distastful, and even Insupportable, to the Intelligent. When a Speech seems to drag upon the Ground with this Length of childish Amplifications, it becomes languid and impertinent, it sets the reverend Judges a nodding, and is a very strong Opiate for the Bench.

XI.

Another Fault of Youth, is a Desire of appearing Bright and Sparkling in all that one says. True Eloquence is never fond of this vain Lustre, which serves only to dazle the Eyes of the Mind. He that is so happy as to be Master of any Ray of good Sense, desires to use it in striking the Heart; because nothing can thoroughly convince the Understanding, but what at the same time engages the Affections. Whereas, he that would always be surprizing, will always be disappointed. These shining Periods have little Force to Persuade, and serve only to relieve the Thoughts of the Judges, after the Fatigue of a long Hearing.

XII.

Men do not take sufficient Care of their outward Address, so as to Frame and Manage it by proper Action, agreeably to the Rules which *Quintilian* has laid down.

And yet 'tis this Action, that *Tully* calls the *Eloquence of the Body*; the Perfection of which, consists in the Gesture and the Pronunciation. The Reason of their Negligence seems to be, that they don't fully apprehend the Weight and Necessity of this Part; of which the above-named Master has given such excellent Precepts.

Aristotle and *Cicero*, believing this to be the pure Gift of Nature, and not reducible to Art or Method, went no farther than barely to represent the great Consequence of it, in several Places of their Works. And indeed the Pronunciation is of so peculiar Importance, that none can neglect it, without abandoning the chief Strength and Beauty of Eloquence. 'Tis this, which chiefly Governs and Reigns in a Discourse; which is its very Life and Soul, which contributes so largely to its Force, and composes all its Grace. The Art of Oratory is never so Great and Potent by the Things that are said, as by the Manner of saying them. Its leading Excellence consists in the Delivery; and 'tis by this it maintains its Empire over the Hearts of Men.

The great Talent of *Hortensius*, and that which enabled him to dispute the Prize with *Cicero*, upon equal Terms, was nothing else but the wonderful Genius he had for Action. He was indeed such a Pattern, for his warm and affectionate manner of Speech, that *Roscius* and *Æsop*, the two famed Comedians of

Est actio quasi quædam corporis eloquentia. Cic. Orat. Gestus ad Vocem, Vultus ad gestum accommodetur, restæ sint brachia, ne manus rusticæ, ne Status indecorus, ne caput oculiq; ab aliâ corporis inclinatione dissident, &c. Quint.

that Age, went constantly to hear him, and to learn their own Art from his Pleadings. But whilst the Gentlemen of the long Robe are so unconcern'd about the forming themselves to Action, and have so very little regard to the whole external Behaviour, we are not to wonder, if we see no Remains of that Eloquence which perform'd so prodigious Works in the Times of *Demosthenes* and *Cicero*: Because these Masters, by their Ardor and Vehemence of Speaking, endeavour'd really to express in themselves, the same Passions which they desir'd to raise in their Hearers. But yet there is a due Temper to be observ'd in this Affair. For we have not wanted an Instance of a very celebrated Advocate, who gave Weight to all his Reasons by the Force and Heat with which he animated his Discourses: and yet this Heat was so very ill manag'd, that he spoilt the whole Grace of his Action by his Desire of appearing over Passionate. When the Fire was once got up into his Head, he could not so much as be understood by his Audience; his Rage and Transport had so disorder'd his Pronunciation. Others again, are as much too Cold, as he was too Warm; such, as in Matters of the highest Importance want even that Affection that is necessary to Win and Engage their Judges; who upon great Subjects will not be moved but by great Springs.

An Orator never touches others, unless he is touch'd in his own Heart; and he ought first to feel all the Impressions that he designs to make. We might apply to such a languid Declaimer, the smart Question of *Cicero* to *Calpidius*, who deliver'd some very severe Things with a very careless Air; *An ista, si vera essent, sic à te dicerentur?* Most of those who speak at
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the Bar are in danger of adding to this faulty Pronunciation a very disagreeable Cadence, which has got the proverbial Name of the *Lawyer's Tone*, and which by keeping the Accent still upon the same Syllable, can dispose the Court to nothing but Sleep.

XIII.

The Subjects of modern Pleading having nothing in them that is truly great and rais'd, cannot set off Eloquence with those Advantages it once receiv'd from the noble and concerning Affairs among the Antients: Such were the Deliberations of War and Peace, the Consultations of the publick Interest, and Good of the State; the Accusation, or Defence of Kings and Princes; and all the other important Matters, which the Orators of those Times with so much Splendour adorned. The Interests that are now debated in Court, are often so very slight and trivial, as to be no way capable of supplying this Art with the Ground and Principal of those noble Movements by which it formerly conquer'd and triumph'd. This is one of the Reasons urged by *Messala* in *Quintilian's* Dialogue, to prove the advantage of the antient Orators above those of his own Days. Indeed little Subjects will naturally make little Speakers, and the Force and Spirit of the Advocate rises in proportion to the Weight and Dignity of the Cause.

His accedebat splendor rerum, & magnitudo causarum, quibus ipsa plurimum eloquentia præstat. Dial. de Orat. Crescit autem cum amplitudine rerum vis ingenii, nec quisquam illustrem orationem facere potest, nisi qui causam parem invenit. Ibid.

XIV.

But tho' the Eloquence of the Bar, be now in its Use restrain'd to the judiciary Kind, and tho' this Kind principally consists in establishing the Proofs on our own Side, and defeating those of our Adversaries, yet it is still of a very considerable Compass: Because in some respect, it takes in all the other Kinds: It praises and dispraises, as the Demonstrative; it advises or dissuades as the Deliberative; it either kindles or extinguishes the Judge's Anger at its Pleasure; it makes it self Mistress of his Heart, and reigns there with absolute Dominion: So that this being the most difficult Way, whoever is so fortunate as to succeed as a Pleader, gives us Reason to think that he would meet with the same Success as an Ambassador, in disposing foreign Princes to War or Peace, according to the Exigencies of State; as *Demosthenes* heretofore inflamed the People of *Greece* against the King of *Macedon*.

XV.

Acrem oratorem, & incensum, & agentem, concursus hominum forique strepitus desiderat.
Cic.

Tho' the Concourse and Multitude that croud the Bar to assist in greater Causes, require a good degree of Motion, and Action, and Fire; yet is there an Eloquence purely Authoritative, which upon some occasions, ought to appear in the same Place; which tho' it declines all Motion, or Passion, and though its manner be grave and serious throughout, yet under this serious Character it has all the Dignity that is requisite to procure an high Veneration. Men hearken to it

it as to an Oracle; because they are bespoken in its favour by the Charms of its outward Address. Its Impressions are made without Heat or Violence; it acts by Power and Prerogative, and rather commands than persuades. This too is the Eloquence proper for Magistrates, and for the Governours of Societies. Those who are employ'd in haranguing or complimenting Princes, or other great Persons, ought to follow this peaceful Eloquence, which that it may preserve its Character, speaks without being disturb'd, and which, upon most Occasions, ought entirely to be made up of Deference and Respect. For 'tis of the petitioning Kind, which convinces and conquers by yielding; and tho' its only Arguments are modest Prayers, and humble Remonstrances, yet it fails not sometimes, to triumph over those whom it intreats, and to exercise a sort of Empire upon those to whom it does Obeisance. This Kind seems peculiar to Subjects addressing their Sovereign. But the Eloquence of Insinuation may likewise be used to any great Lords, by their Dependents and Vassals, in shewing them the Truth and Reason of what is propos'd by secret Turns and Glances, and circular Speeches, and by all the engaging Artifices of a respectful Application: Especially to those whose Power and Independance will not suffer them to be treated with upon common Terms, and who have no Taste for Argument, unless it be seasoned with Submission.

*Illud genus
ostentatio-
ni composi-
tum, solum
petit audi-
entium ve-
luptatem,
ideoque
omnes di-
cendi artes
aperis or-
naturumque
orationis
exponit.
Quint.*

XVI.

*Illud genus
insigne ac
florens, pi-
ctum &
expositum
ad volup-
tatem au-
ditoris &
delectatio-
nem refe-
ratur.
Cic. de
Orat.*

I should here subjoin some Remarks concerning that Kind of Eloquence which we term demonstrative. But this depending much more on the Force of Genius, than on Study and Meditation, I have no other Rules to offer, towards its Improvement and Perfection, than what *Longinus* has given us for attaining the Sublimity of Style. For this Kind requires a Loftiness both in Thought and Expression, and can bear nothing that is of a moderate Character. But since 'tis one of the hardest Things in the World to praise well; either because there are but few Subjects that deserve Praise, or because it cannot rightly be given without the greatest Art, the choicest Ornaments, and the exactest Delicacy, which are rarely attainable: A wise and judicious Man, will decline all Occasions of undertaking what 'tis a great Hazard, if he perform with Success. We have scarce any good Precedents among the Antients of this encomiastick Strain. For, as to the two Panegyricks of *Isocrates*, upon *Helen* and *Busiris*, tho' they are very fine in themselves; tho' they have met with great Applause from all the Criticks; tho' they have an Air of Solidity and good Sense running thro' the whole Composition; yet the Design of the Author is so very extraordinary, that they cannot well be propos'd as Models for our Imitation. He undertakes to commend two Persons, who perhaps have the least Title to Commendation of all that ever liv'd in the World: A Woman that by her Beauty, and by the Use she made of it, utterly ruin'd her Country; and a Man the most detested Exam-
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ple of Cruelty and Barbarity. So that we ought to look on these Compositions, as a meer Sport and Exercise of Wit. To praise a Woman, whose dishonest Love set a whole Kingdom on Fire, would seem a very unreasonable Task. And yet this great Author has executed it so Nobly, and with such a Mixture of bright and worthy Conceptions, that we may affirm this to be his Master-piece. In which he exposes the Impertinence of the Sophists, who affected frivolous Subjects, and discharg'd them in as frivolous a Manner. The whole Discourse is levell'd against these pretended Orations, who had labour'd to corrupt the good Sense of *Athens*. He do's not so much extol *Helen* by the Fame of her own good Qualities, as by the Greatness of *Theseus* her Lover, and by the Glory of the *Athenian* State; of which *Theseus* was the Founder. And in the Elogy of *Busiris*, he teaches the true Method of Encomium, and of Apology, maintaining, that Eloquence should only be employ'd in the Service and Defence of Vertue; and so Demonstrating the Innocency of this Art, which the Sophists would have Debauch'd by their vain and vitious Corruptions.

REFLECTIONS UPON THE ELOQUENCE OF THE PULPIT.

TIS suprizing to observe, that of the great Number of Persons who apply themselves to Preaching, there should yet be so few who distinguish themselves in any eminent Manner, notwithstanding their signally great Advantages above all others that speak in Publick. For it must be allow'd, that the Eloquence of the Bar cannot supply an Orator, either with so important Subjects, or with so sensible Expressions, or with so strong and vigorous Passions, as the Eloquence of the Pulpit. All the Springs which this makes Use of, to raise the Affections, are so forcible; its Figures, sanctify'd by the Communion it maintains with the Holy Spirit, are so glorious, the Mysteries which it describes are so great and sublime, and it speaks with such Authority, that if there be any Species of Eloquence that can lay claim to the Sovereignty of Mens Hearts, by the Power it has to turn and move them, and by its natural Freedom and Independence, 'tis this alone that deserves to be crown'd. To what Cause then can we ascribe

ascribe the Scarcity of good Preachers? It is not certainly the Fault of the Auditors: For their Mind is prepar'd by Faith for a perfect Submission to all that shall be deliver'd: The Sight of God's House, and of his holy Altar, inspires them with Attention and Veneration: and by the Principles of their Religion they are before habitually convinc'd of what they come to hear inculcated. In short, as a Preacher speaks only on the Part of God; as his Word is the Word of God Himself; as he is commission'd to promise Eternal Rewards to them that Believe, and to threaten Eternal Punishments to them that Believe not: If he comes not up to his great Character, the Fault must be his own. But since it is but too visible that fewer succeed in this than perhaps in any other Profession, it may not be improper to enquire into the true Reason; the better to prevent all Miscarriage in an Affair of the last Consequence. And this, I hope, in some measure to do, by the following Reflections.

I.

Men are not wont seriously enough to consider what Disposition of Spirit is required, by the sacred Ministry of the Word of God, and by the Dignity of so exalted a Function. There is need, not only of great Application and severe Study, to fill the Mind with those noble Ideas which alone can form the Character of this Eloquence; but likewise of long Privacy and Retirement, to prepare the Heart for the Reception of the Holy Ghost, who is pleas'd to use a Minister as his Interpreter. 'Tis from Him therefore that the Clergy ought immediately to derive their Mission by the Principles

*Quomodo
prædica-
bunt, nisi
mittantur?*
Rom. 12.

ciples of inward Piety and secret Goodness; that their Soul being purified by the Exercise of all manner of Vertue, may become susceptible of heavenly Light, and of that Grace of Uñction which is given only to the Humble and the Pure; and that at length they may be fitted to receive Authority from the Governors of the Church, who are impower'd by God to communicate their Gift and Office to others. It should therefore be the earnest Care of every Person who desires to be admitted to this holy Vocation, not to confide so much in himself and his own Genius, as to forbear the seeking and imploring the Aids of Heaven, by frequent Meditation and Prayer. Without these Aids 'tis impossible he should have so clear and so extensive a View of the Gospel Truths, as is necessary for the Explaining them to the People. But is this really done by all? Is it so much as thought of by some? What Studies are undertaken, what Solitudes embrac'd for this Purpose? What Preparation of Mind do Men bring to the Altar? Do we not see every Day young Preachers, deficient in Vertue and Knowledge, mounting the Pulpit as an Actor does the Stage, only to play a Part? They invite their Friends, make a large Circle and Assembly of their Relations and honest Acquaintance, to grace the Audience, and to encourage the new-entred Declaimer. But these unstedg'd Orators have been receiv'd either with Contempt or Pity, by all unprejudic'd Judges, even at such Times when they fancied themselves to have perform'd to Admiration. They had a very wrong and imperfect Notion of this sacred Office, if they hoped, by such Means, to erect themselves into Preachers. For other Qualifications, both
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Intellectual and Moral, are necessary, successfully to brandish the Sword of the Word of God before the Eyes of Sinners; to reduce Libertines under the sacred Yoke of the Gospel; to persuade Men by the Terrors of the last Judgment, and to sustain the Grandeur and Majesty of those high Subjects, of which our Religion professedly Treats. 'Twas, no doubt, for this Reason, that the two Apostles S. James and S. John were surnam'd by their Master, *the Sons of Thunder*; because the Word of God, spoken by them with due Force and Weight, was Bright and Terrible in their Mouths, like that astonishing Meteor. *Imposu-
eis nomina
Boanerges,
quod est fi-
lii tonitru.* Mar. 3.

A Man that would preach with Effect, and with Blessings attending, must have another sort of a Call than that of a Declaimer, who makes a Diversion of the Pulpit; or than that of a certain Person, who never came into it, but by order of his Physician, and to bring down his Corpulency, that began to grow troublesome. These are such deplorable Instances, that nothing but unhappy Experience could make us credit.

II.

Nor do Men sufficiently reflect, that 'tis in God's Behalf, and in His Name, that they speak from the Pulpit: And thus they deprive His holy Word of its just Weight and Authority. They are commonly too much dispos'd to indulge their own Fancy: They preach themselves, and, as it were, quench the Spirit of God, to give free Scope to their own vain Spirit. This was not the Method of the Prophets, those Preachers of the old Law: They
never

Pro Christo never speak to the People in their own Personal Capacity, but as sent and commission'd *legatione* by God: and the Greatness of their Master, *fungimur* whose Commands they deliver'd, procur'd them *sauquam* the Veneration of Multitudes, and of Rulers. *Dei exhortante per nos.*

I remember to have seen an Ambassador of a certain petty Prince, who had no manner of Talent for Eloquence, yet when he had any thing to propose, on the Part of his Master, was heard, not only with Attention, but with Success; by means of the Art he had to make himself appear considerable; and that was, to assume his Prince's Air and Port, and to relinquish his own. Thus the Eloquence of the Pulpit requires a Dignity in the Person, by requiring a Gravity in his Words: Nothing light or frivolous should be suffer'd to come from thence. What Force, what Majesty, would wait upon God's Word, had Men the Art to represent it as it is in it self, the Word of God; and not as an Invention of Human Wit! Those who would successfully Preach this Word, must do it according to St. Paul's Example, *per arma justitiæ, in verbo veritatis, in virtute Dei.*

Non in persuasibilibus humanæ sapientiæ verbis, sed in ostensione Spiritus & virtutis.

1 Cor. 2.

III.

But a Preacher will yet the better comprehend with what Reverence he ought to treat the Word of God, if he considers those holy Fears, and awful Tremblings, with which the Angels are, by *Isaiab*, described in their Act of Worship, and their approach to the Altar, and if he remembers that 'tis not without Terror they pronounce the Holy and Divine Name; *I saw*, says the Prophet, *the Lord sitting upon his Throne, high and lifted up, and his Train filled*

filled the Temple. Above it stood the Seraphims; each one had six Wings; with twain he covered his Face, and with twain he covered his Feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another and said, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts, the whole Earth is full of His Glory.

See the profound Veneration, with which the most Pure and Holy Spirits speak of God! If therefore, a Preacher speak of Him with a languid Indifference; if he send Home his Audience Cold and even Frozen in their Affections; 'tis because his own are as far from being inflamed. Divine Innocence dying for Sinners; the Blood of the Son of God shed on Mount *Calvary*; the Holiness of our Religion, the great Mysteries of Faith, and the last Importance of Salvation, are all insufficient to warm the Eloquence of the Generality of Preachers, and to inspire them with that holy Ardour which alone can enkindle the Zeal of other Men. And thus they miserably delude the Hunger and Thirst of the Faithful, by amusing their Curiosity with vain Flowers, and insipid Elegancies.

IV.

There is nothing, perhaps, of greater Force, to convince a Preacher of the high Importance of his Ministry, and of the chief and essential Parts of his Duty and Obligation, than the solemn Calling and Designation of the Prophet *Jeremy*, as a Minister of God's Word, the Ceremony of which he describes in his first Chapter.

He relates, that he was chosen by God to this Function, before he was born, and that he came from his Mother's Womb, endow'd with

with the Gifts and Qualities proper to his Charge; sanctified by Heaven for the worthy Sustaining of so high and holy a Character: That he did, but in vain, endeavour to excuse himself by the Weakness of his Age, and the Imperfection of his Utterance: That God was pleas'd to Arm him with a fearless and undaunted Spirit: Thus enabling him to preach to Princes, and the mighty Ones of the Earth: That he touch'd his Lips to purifie them; and by his own immediate Action, put his Words into his Mouth, saying unto him; *See, I have this Day set thee over the Nations, and over the Kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build and to plant.* That is, by the Power of thy Words, thou shalt root out all Vice and Sin, and shalt Plant and Establish all Vertue in its room: For this is the great Design and End of Preaching: But if God was pleas'd to make use of all this Ceremony and Pomp, at the Inauguration of a Preacher of the Old Law, which was but a Shadow of the New, and but an imperfect Figure of that Purity of Heart which we preach under the Law of Grace; what Preparation can ever be sufficient to form and dispose an Evangelical Preacher, who shall imitate *St. Paul*, in preaching *Christ Crucified*, and shall display to the People the noble Ideas of Christianity, and the sublime Science of the Cross.

V.

As sacred Eloquence Labours in an Infinitely more noble Subject than Profane; as it proposes an Eternal Kingdom, to excite our Hopes, and everlasting Torments to alarm our

our Fears; as the Holiness of our Mysteries, the Purity of our Morals, the Majesty of that God whom we adore, represented in Scripture under such illustrious Characters; together with all the tremendous Truths that make our Religion so august and sacred; are the common Themes in which it is exercis'd: So in order to the Accomplishment of so great Designs, it requires a much larger Capacity, and a much more elevated Genius, than would be necessary to furnish out a *Pagan* Orator. There should be a Grandour in the Personage, a Dignity in the Countenance, a Devotion in the Eyes, an Ardour in the Pronunciation, a general Freedom in the Action, and the Air and Mien of a Prophet. But the Combination of these external Qualities only is so very rare, that there seems to have been but one Person in the present Age, who had this accomplish'd Genius for Preaching. Besides, a Vivacity of Imagination, and a Clearness of Wit; which he possess'd in a very high Degree, and which gave him a great Facility of explaining his Thoughts, he had perhaps the compleatest Talent for Delivery, that the World ever knew. For we may say, he was an Orator in his Look, in his Voice, in his Gesture, and in his whole Person; he could do what he pleas'd with his Eyes; could give any Tone to his Voice, any Air to his Countenance, any Turn to his Gesture, any Agreeableness to his Discourse. He had an Art of making himself heard, perhaps beyond all that ever spoke: And as none was ever a greater Master of what he said, or of the Manner of saying it, he was able to fix any Impression whatsoever upon his Audience. The most spacious Places where he appear'd in the Pulpit, were too strait to

contain the Multitude of his Followers. Machines and Theatres were erected for the Convenience of hearing him, in the largest Churches of *Paris*. Tho' his too great easiness and fluency of Expression, commonly led him into a Neglect of preparing himself, yet he had such a Way of sustaining by the Force of Action, the most unpremeditated Matter, as to pass it off with Advantage in the speaking. The most common Things were heard from his Mouth with no less Applause, than the most extraordinary Strokes of the greatest and ablest in the same Profession. He had been certainly the most accomplish'd Preacher of the Age, had his Judgment and Capacity been equal to his other Talents, and had he not been so excessive in his Action: Which was too particular, and not altogether grave enough for the Place in which he stood.

VI.

*Non in sapientia
verbi, ne
evacuatur
crux Christi.*

1 Cor. 3.

These natural Talents are sometimes so very bright and dazling, that they seem to rob (if we may so speak) the Word of God of that Esteem and Veneration which we ought to pay to it. Many Persons are therefore heard with Attention, not because they speak from God, but because they speak agreeably to Men, because they have the Gift of Eloquence; because they vent Things that are New and Surprizing, because they have some Character of Greatness, and Dignity; or for the sake of some other shining and out-side Advantage. Thus the Men of *Jerusalem*, resorted to hear the Prophet *Ezekiel*, only because he was an Eloquent Man. Thus *S. Austin*, before his Conversion, lov'd to be an Auditor of

of *S. Ambrose*, only as a fine Speaker. This Sort of Curiosity being too earthly and sensual, a Preacher ought to avoid the giving any Occasion to it, by the Gaiety of his Discourse. And this he will easily do, if he make it his full Aim and Resolution, rather to Profit than to Please: In which Method he cannot be unsuccessful, if he always speak what is truly Good and Instructive, and always speak it as from his Heart.

VII.

It is by no means necessary, that all those who are called to the Holy Ministry, should be endow'd with all the great Qualifications which I have been here describing. On the contrary, 'tis highly useful, that the Church should be furnish'd with Preachers of different Capacities, suitable to the diversity of their Hearers. 'Tis enough for him that has the Charge of a vulgar Congregation, thoroughly to understand the plain Rules of Christianity, and to render them intelligible to others. A Preacher of moderate Endowments may contribute very much to the Service and Support of Religion, by instructing the People, and by softening the driest and most barren Soils with the Waters of pure, and salutary Doctrine. The unwearied Labour and Travel of these Popular Instructors, is of so much the higher Value in the sight of God, as it appears little and humble to the Eyes of Men. Whatsoever a Man's natural Parts are, if he be fit to Speak, he may likewise be fit to Instruct.

And tho' 'tis the Privilege of a great Genius regularly to affect and move, yet there are some Preachers, who, by the help of a pow-

erful Delivery, have the same Influence on the People, as the Trumpets have on the Soldiers in a Battle: The very Sound persuades and excites.

'Tis not always Reason that strikes upon gross Apprehensions, and stirs them up to Action: For this they cannot always hear and understand, but 'tis the Warmth and Passion of the Speaker: 'Tis the Noise and outward Force that usually makes the Impression; nor do the Things spoken operate so strongly, as the Manner of speaking them, because this Manner is obvious to the Senses, whereas the Things themselves are not: And therefore the People very often judge of a Man's Arguments by the Tone of his Voice. He that speaks the loudest and strongest, is commonly Master of their Belief; and they are less sway'd by his Reasons than by his personal Authority; because their Mind is seldom wrought upon by any Thing, but by that which works more forcibly upon their Sense.

But then, such a popular Preacher ought well to consider, that he will but expose himself, and his Profession, if he shall vainly set up for a Wit, and endeavour rather to divert the Fancy, than to edifie the Conscience. It is sufficient for the Uses of a common Auditor, barely to propose to them the great Truths of our Religion, and the Holiness of its Precepts; without seeking so many Turns and Artifices of Discourse, which are very often alike incommodious to the Speaker and the Hearers.

VIII.

The greatest Part of our Preachers seem deficient in Learning and Study. And this obliges them to Copy one from another, that they may have Matter enough to furnish out their Discourses; they draw from the Stream, because they are Strangers to the Fountain-head. Hence they often make use of false Reasons to enforce the Practice of Vertue, having neither Capacity enough to find out good Ones, nor Art enough to make them apprehended, if they chance to have found them. They often quite spoil themselves by too servile an Imitation; and lose what they were capable of performing, by affecting that of which they are incapable. Hence arise those frequent Inequalities and Deformities in Persons that relinquish their own Genius to assume another Man's. And this false Procedure is very fruitful of bad Preachers. On the contrary, we ought never to make use of the Thoughts or Designs of others, but when we can truly digest them, and can transform them into our own.

IX.

The Eloquence of the Pulpit can never be great and solid, without a Largeness of Capacity; and none can ever pursue it with Success, who has not taken care before-hand to furnish his Mind with all that preparative Knowledge which is necessary to the worthy Handling the Word of God. Divinity is the Sum and Perfection of this: without which a Preacher cannot have Weight and Authority

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riety enough to give a positive Decision in the Subjects that come before him. 'Tis a great Weakness in a Preacher, not to be able to declare precisely, what is a Matter of Faith, and what not: For then, he must hesitate when he ought to determine. But we are likewise to consider, That as nothing is so great and noble, and, indeed, nothing so agreeable in sacred Eloquence, as Divinity, when explain'd in a due Manner, and when 'tis properly the Knowledge of our Religion; so there's nothing more unhappy, nothing more disgusting, if it be not treated with that Profoundness of Understanding, and that full Sufficiency of Strength which its Dignity might challenge.

X.

Yet too great a Familiarity with the Schoolmen, may rather turn to the Prejudice than to the Advantage of a Preacher; if he is not skill'd in the right Use of them, and cannot apply them to his Business with Caution and Management. For the Air of the Schools is really quite opposite to Eloquence; and, I believe, the Reading of *Thomas Aquinas*, though so very solid in his Judgment, and exact in his Method, has made more bad Preachers than good, because he writ in so dark and miserable an Age, the Taste of which was wholly vitiated and corrupted. His hard and jejune Way of saying Things, is no less improper for an Orator, than the Things which he says are proper. Not but that his Simplicity of Style is in it self the fittest for Instruction; but 'tis certainly very different from that which we ought to follow in publick Speaking. The
Divines

Divines who succeeded him, and upon his Authority establish'd the scholastick Way, are equally dangerous to the Eloquence of the Pulpit, which would be impoverish'd, and quite dried up by these subtle Reasonings, that may give Nerves to a Discourse, yet that take away all its Grace and good Complexion. True Logick, or the Art of Thinking, is, as I have before observ'd, absolutely necessary to Eloquence, which without it can be no better than Impertinence and empty Prattle. But then we are not to make use of Logick in its own Stiffness and dry Formality; but we must soften it by a due Mixture of Ornament, to render a Discourse fine and palatable.

IX.

The same Remarks may be pass'd on the Study of the *Latin* Fathers, who are no less opposite to the Art of Preaching than the School-Divines, by reason of the low and wretched Estate of Eloquence in their Days. Every one knows to what Extremities all that we Term good Sense, or all that is Polite in Learning, was reduced by the Inundations of the barbarous People which broke in upon *Italy*. All the Fathers of the first Ages, as low as *St. Bernard*, writ in this dry and sapless Manner, excepting a very few, who preserv'd themselves from the false Taste by some little Vein and Tincture of Antiquity, such as *Minutius Felix*, *Salvian*, *Arnobius*, and *St. Jerome*, to whom we may add *St. Ambrose* and *St. Austin*, in some Parts of their Works. The *Greek* Fathers are better Orators than the *Latin*; though the Conduct of their Design, and the Management of their Subjects, is commonly

very plain and simple, never very just, or conformable to the Rules of Art; most of them being contented with an easy and natural Strain, and even too much indulging their free Genius, as may be observ'd in *St. Basil* and *St. Chrysostom*. I say, most of them, for *St. Gregory Nazianzen* seems more artful and refined. But while we thus admonish Preachers of the Danger to which their Eloquence may be expos'd by reading the *Latin* Fathers, only to invite their Caution in this Affair, we are by no means for prohibiting all Commerce with them. The Fathers are not only of excellent Use, but of absolute Necessity to a Preacher, to fill his Mind with those just Ideas of the Holiness and Grandour of our Religion, which occur in those venerable Writers. It is from them, as from the purest Source of *Christian* Morals, that we are to derive our Knowledge of the Doctrines which we preach. The Fathers are the natural Interpreters of the *Gospel*; and the Church has for no other Reason, adorn'd them with that reverend and sacred Name, but because their Works are, as it were, the Patrimony and Inheritance which they have bequeath'd to the Faithful, as to their genuine Ofspring.

XII.

A Preacher must not only improve and enrich his Judgment by a long Study of Divinity, and frequent Converse with the Fathers, whom he should take care to read in a good Method: But he must likewise endeavour to form to himself such a *Christian* Rhetorick, as we don't find described by the ancient Masters, who had not the least Idea of it; nor by the Modern, who have only copied from the Ancient

cient. The Majesty of our Religion, the Sanctity of its Laws, the Purity of its Morals, the Loftiness of its Mysteries, and the Importance of all its Subjects, ought to give such an Elevation to sacred Eloquence, as is not to be sustain'd by the Weakness of a merely human Capacity. There must be a great, and noble, and majestick Air, and a Language, if possible, not inferior to the Theme. For no Man ought to speak of God, and of Heavenly Things, without the utmost Dignity of Style, and such a *Voice of great Words* as the Prophet mentions. 'T would be in vain to seek this Pitch of Eloquence in *Aristotle's Rhetorick*, in the Ideas of *Hermogenes*, or the Institutions of *Quintilian*.

Even that sublime Manner which *Longinus* has framed, by heaping together all the great Expressions of the Antients, is but low and creeping, in comparison with that which a Preacher ought to follow, if he would truly reach and maintain his Character; That exalted Mien which becomes the Greatness of Christianity, and the incomprehensible Mysteries of Faith, can only be represented by those Divine Images which occur in the Holy Scriptures, to all such as have the Gift of searching its Depths. It is only in this pure and fruitful Stream, that a Preacher can find those magnificent Expressions, which have the Holy Spirit for their Author: 'Tis hence he must take those bright Ideas, and that true Sublimity, which compose the essential Character of the Oratory of the Temple, such as recommended *Apollos* to the Approbation of *St. Paul*, and to the Honour of being his fellow Labourer, as *an eloquent Man, and mighty in the Scriptures*. A Preacher then, who would

Naturali-
ter plus
valet apud
plurimos
malorum
timor,
quàm spes
bonorum.
Quintil.

would attain the Eloquence, peculiar to his Function, must be constant and assiduous in reading the Prophets, and must allow himself Time to meditate on what he reads: especially if he is desirous of exciting Terror, which he will almost perpetually have Occasion to do. For we are not skill'd in the Art of Preaching, unless we can alarm the Conscience of a Sinner, and by casting proper Fears into his Spirit, can awaken him out of that Slumber which was brought upon him by the Softness of a licentious Age. The Holy Scripture is so plentiful a Fountain of all the Riches, and all the Ornaments of Eloquence, as to afford a proper Model for every Way, and every Style.

Thus *Isaiah* is Lofty, *Jeremiah* is Pathetical, *Ezekiel* is Terrible, *Daniel* Mild and Gentle: and as for the other Prophets, Greatness is their general Character; nor have we any thing written with the like Force by Pagan Authors. Good Sense, and true Reason was never display'd to so much Advantage in any moral Treatise, as it is in the Books of *Solomon*.

γεννηται
φῶς, καὶ
ἐγένετο

No History was ever written with such a mixt Air of Simplicity and Majesty, as that of *Moses*: A few Words cited from the Beginning of which, supplied *Longinus* with his noblest Example of the sublime Kind, so vastly superiour to the greatest Elevation of human Style. Nothing was ever compos'd with more tender Passions, or with a greater Delicacy of pious and devout Strains, than the *Psalms* of *David*. The most refin'd Policy of worldly Sages, never carried its Views so far, as the Books of *Proverbs* and *Ecclesiastes*. In a Word, the utmost Extent and Capacity of human

human Wit, was never able to furnish out a Subject so vast and profound, as those adorable Mysteries of Grace and Predestination, contain'd in *St. Paul's Epistles*. But indeed, what Elogies can describe the Excellence and Dignity of the *New Testament*, which is, most emphatically, the Book of our Religion, and to which all the prophetick Writings were but a kind of Preface, or Introduction: What can be conceiv'd so great and expressive, as that short Character of our Lord's Discourses, given by himself? *The Words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are Life*: Other Books are compos'd only of Words; this only of Things: And as 'tis the Character of Man's Spirit, to speak Much and say Little; so 'tis the Character of the Spirit of God, to speak Little, and say Much. For the holy Scriptures, having a peculiar Greatness of Sense, couch'd under a plain and familiar Phrase, lead us commonly to conceive more than they express. Can there be so much Simplicity, or Succinctness, in any other Expression, as in those two, *The Word was made Flesh: — And they crucified him*? How many Volumes have been written to explain the full Import of so few Syllables? How many more may still be written on the same Theme? And what Penetration of Spirit can ever be sufficient to fathom the utmost Depths of those mysterious Truths? And yet Men are too much dispos'd to rest in the bare Words, and not to search into their hidden Stores by diligent Meditation. What Example have we of a Preacher able to pierce thro' the awful Darkness and sacred Obscurity of the Scriptural Text, and to discover all the Treasures of Knowledge that it conceals? How few are
worthy

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*Parvuli
petierunt
panem, &
non erat
qui fran-
geret eis.
Lam. 4.*

worthy to break this holy Bread of the Word of God, which ought to be the common Food of *Christians*? That is, how few are so profoundly knowing and skilful, as to unfold to the People, the full Sense and Compass of the Scripture, and to apply it properly in their Discourses, as the surest Means of Persuasion and Success? Men preach their own Imaginations, and not the Conceptions of the Spirit of God. And is not this to fail in the very first Principles? For there can be no *Christian* Eloquence, but such as is founded upon the genuine Idea drawn from the holy Writings, which are its proper Fountain and Original.

XIII.

There is a particular Style for the Pulpit, which seems not to have sufficiently exercis'd the Care and Study of Preachers. This Style is the same that the Apostles, after they had receiv'd the Holy Ghost, made use of in their Discourses to the People, recorded in the Book of *Acts*; where we find them explaining their Subject, by Expressions taken out of the *Old* and *New Testament*. 'Tis from this sacred Spring, that they derive their Terms, their Phrase, their Figures, their Examples, their Arguments, and all the Amplifications of their Oratory: or rather, the Holy Spirit, speaking by their Mouth, delivers himself in the same Manner, as by the Voice of the Prophets, because he is the same Spirit. 'Tis this Manner which the Pulpit ought to express and imitate, and which a Preacher should labour to acquire, by that inward Light, resulting from his Meditation, and by his frequent reading of the Holy Scriptures, in which he ought to be familiarly

familiarly vers'd, as they are the richest Treasure our *Saviour* has left to his Church. Whoever would be a Teacher of Men, and would expound to them the Truths of Religion, must first be a Disciple of the Holy Spirit: He must by an humble and obedient Faith, enter into the Knowledge of those Heavenly Instructions, which are the spiritual *Manna*, that God has been pleas'd to hide under the Veil of the Scriptures. And when a Preacher has hence fill'd his own Capacity, he pours this divine Unction, which is the true Character of the Word of God, on all that he delivers; his Words pierce, as so many Rays, to enlighten the Minds of his Hearers, and as so many Flames, to enliven and kindle their Hearts.

XIV.

But besides this Fund of Sense, drawn, as I have observ'd, from the Reading of the Fathers, and from a long Course of Theological Studies; and besides this peculiar Art of Eloquence form'd upon the Model of the Prophets, a Preacher ought to frame to himself a particular Morality, built wholly on the Principles of the Gospel. For all other Systems of Morals can reach no higher than to bare Philosophy and Pagan Probity. This sacred and refin'd Morality is to be sought for, not only in the four Evangelists, but likewise in *St. Paul's* Epistles, and in the Homilies of *St. Chrysostom*, where it is so admirably explain'd. These Homilies ought to be a Preacher's daily Study. He will also receive great Instructions in the same way from *St. Austin*, *St. Jerom*, *St. Gregory the Great*, *St. Bernard*,
and

and the other Fathers. These he must peruse with the exactest Care and Judgment, not to cull out the fine Thoughts and bright Periods, with which the younger Sort are so desirous to adorn their Compositions, and which, to speak the Truth, are utterly unserviceable to Edification, and true Compunction of Spirit.

XV.

*Attende
tibi, &
Doctrinae,
1 Tim. 4.*

True Christian Morality can only be derived from those pure and holy Fountains, but now described; especially in this our Age, when every Man is for framing his Morals according to his Fancy, and when there are not wanting such extravagant Preachers, as vent from the Pulpit their own Chagrin and Complexion for the great Laws of Duty, with certain ridiculous and visionary Schemes, which they have before-hand entertain'd, and which are purely owing to a Spirit of Novelty. Have we not some time since beheld a Preacher in *Paris*, who though profoundly ignorant of what belong'd to his Character and Profession, undertook to decide every Thing in the most rigorous Manner; and who, because he utter'd the greatest Absurdities with the assurance of a Prophet, or rather with the Confidence of a Sophist, and in practical Points ventured at any Extravagance whatsoever, when once the Fumes of his Zeal were got into his Brain, was follow'd more than all his reverend Brethren? For 'tis the Mode of our Nation, and of *Paris* especially, to run after every Thing that is new, and that has an Air of Singularity. But when we come to sift these Orators to the bottom, who thus attempt to sanctify their Discourses with an affected Rigour,

*Prophetae
ejus vesani,
viri infideles,
Zeph. 4.*

Rigour, we find that they are not altogether so hard-hearted to themselves as to others. Thus it was with that Doctor, who beginning his Course of Lent-Sermons, in a famous Church of *Paris*, declared to his Audience with the Air and Tone of a great Reformer, that they were to expect nothing from him but the severest Morality, and the height of Christian Discipline, in opposition to the licentious Rules of the modern Casuists. But, as the Town is wont not to be over-charitable, Men took the same freedom with this Gentleman's Morals, as he had done with theirs; his Story was the common Theme of Discourse, and Entertainment of Company. He that would preach up Severity, must imitate our blessed Saviour, and preach it by his own Example. 'Tis the Character of Christian Strictness, to be gentle to others, and severe to ourselves. To appear otherwise, is to act the Impostor, or the Comedian, not the Preacher. The last Age was disturb'd by certain false Zealots, who, at the same time pretended to preach a greater degree of Purity and Perfection, while they were lifting up unholy Hands to Heaven, and promoting Error and Faction upon Earth. In a word, all Preachers, whose Ignorance leads them to this Extreme, who make Enormities and Abominations of mere Trifles, who by their plenitude of Power condemn a Woman for wearing colour'd Ribbons, or for walking out upon a Festival; all such Preachers, I say, dishonour their Ministry by so violent an Excess; they discourage the Good and Pious by their false Pictures of Vices, and authorize the Libertines and Impious by their frightful Representations of Virtue, which they draw with an Air of Cruelty
and

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and Barbarity, so different from its native
Charms.

XVI.

The ill Success of most Preachers arises from their little Care to understand the moral Part of Christianity, and the little Talent they have to explain and enforce it; for the Draughts of this Part, if rightly made, are of all the most effectual in striking upon Human Minds. They are often deficient in this respect through a vain Curiosity of over-much Reasoning, which does but obstruct and choak up their Matter. This is a way that some take to avoid the Difficulty of painting the Manners, which is the hardest Task of an Orator, though the most potent to gain him Admiration. He that would attempt it with Credit, must begin with the Knowledge of Man's Heart; he must have a View of all its secret Motions, to describe it naturally, and to draw Men so much to the Life, as that they may know themselves in the Piece. 'Tis here the generality of Preachers fail; they represent the Manners in wrong Colours, and thus they lose all Power and Influence with their Hearers, because these Pourtraicts being false, no Man applies them to himself, nor thinks he sat for a Picture, that does not resemble him. They address themselves to the Strict and Virtuous, as to profligate Sinners; to Courtiers, as to recluse; they transplant their Country Discourses into the City, and vend their elaborate Compositions, where Catechisms, and the plainest Instructions, would alone be serviceable. Exery one knows the Story of the Preacher that descanted upon all the Species
of

of Sins against the Seventh Commandment, before a Society of religious and very intelligent Women. This seems to be the most general Fault of the Pulpit; for the necessary Distinction of Persons, and the perfect Knowledge of the Manners, are indeed the rarest Accomplishments, as require so large an Experience of the World, assisted with the joint Stock of Philosophy and Divinity. A Preacher ought to be intimately conversant in these Studies, as the Grounds of that Discernment so essential to his Profession, in which I am perswaded, no Man ever succeeds, but in proportion to the degree of true Discernment that he is Master of, that is, so far only as he understands the Manners and the Heart of Man.

XVII.

This Heart of Man is a great and unfathomable Deep; whatever Discoveries we can make in it, there are others daily to be made. And yet in order to the giving the true Picture of it, 'tis not enough to have dived so far into it, as to apprehend its Cheats, its Impostures, its Dissimulations, its Weakness, its Suspicions, its Jealousies, its Distrusts, its Irresolutions, its Contradictions, its Turns, its Inequalities, its Niceties in Points of Interest, its Pride, its Presumption, the confused Medley of all its Passions, together with the natural, and almost inconceivable Biass that it has towards Dissimulation and Disguise; but we must likewise pluck off its Mask of Virtue, of Candour, and of Sincerity, which it commonly wears, the more artificially to carry on its refin'd Dissimulation; we must let it see how by

an inexhaustible Spring of Self-love, (against which the Fathers have with so much Warmth inveigh'd) and by a false and mistaken Modesty, it is wont to conceal even from it self the Wickedness of its own Designs, and so to skreen off the Confusion that must otherwise follow upon them. Being in it self void of all Virtue, and over-spread with every Vice, we ought to convince it, that the Joy it sometimes discovers in the Exercise of Virtue is too often counterfeit; that it does but flatter it self with a Shadow of Grief and Penitence in its Acts of Humiliation; that its Faith, and Hope, and Charity, and all its Gifts and Graces, are sometimes but imaginary and supposititious, yielding only a vain Amusement and delusive Tranquillity, under the wild and groundless Schemes that it forms of eternal Happiness. In one Word, to display it throughout, and to shew it such as it is, we ought to present to its Sight its pretended Modesty, and Indifference in seeking; its artificial Shifts and Excuses in avoiding; its perverse Judgments in rating and esteeming; the Weakness of its Resolutions; its perpetual Motion and restless Disquiet in pursuing. I should be endless, if I farther endeavour'd to go through all its Mazes and Intricacies, and to lay open all its Folds. I have said enough to point out the Master Springs of its several Motions, which ought to be exactly weigh'd and consider'd by every Preacher that would distinguish himself in his Order. For, indeed, the Knowledge of Man's Heart, or of Human Nature, in a greater or lesser Degree, is almost the only thing that makes a real Difference in the Talents of the Pulpit, amidst that infinite Variety of the Ways and Methods of preaching.

The

The small Number of those who Discourse with Power and real Effect, is owing to their slender Proficiency in the Knowledge of Mankind. Because, while they hover in a Cloud of Generals, and descend not to trace out the particular Lines and Features of Manners, the Audience think themselves unconcern'd in the Description. 'Tis the just Accuracy of moral Characters, that gives the chief Weight and Influence to a Preacher's Discourse; and this Accuracy being so uncommon a Secret, the Influence of Preaching cannot be much more diffus'd. But here we ought to interpose a Caution, that no Man should venture upon this Work of painting the Morals, unless supported by a large Genius, and as large an Experience. Both the one and the other are of such absolute Necessity in this Affair, that whosoever embarks in it without them is not so likely to gain Admiration, as Pity or Contempt.

XVIII.

Besides this Exactness of the Moral, which is a Part of Eloquence, that contributes the most to the rendring it great and admirable, the Art of raising the Affections, is of no small Efficacy in the same Regard. 'Tis not enough for a Preacher to say great Truths, but he must say them well and heartily, and with an Air of decent Passion and Concern. For to speak moving Things, and to remain one's self unmoved, is taken but for a Grimace, and is laugh'd at accordingly. I have formerly heard a Doctor of the Sorbonne, who preach'd very true Gospel, in the choicest Language, and with a constant Vein of good

*Tibi, si vis
me flere,
dolendum
est. Hor.*

Sense; but he spoke coldly, without any Action, without that proper Warmth, which alone can affect or move. Whence some that were pleasantly dispos'd, took an Occasion of observing, That so sedate a Preacher must certainly be given up to Reprobation by his Audience, because he appear'd to have so little Interest in what he said. And, indeed, this languid and careless Delivery, in religious Subjects, is a great Obstacle to the Power and Efficacy of the Word of God, which unless utter'd with a reasonable Degree of Earnestness and Ardor, is not productive of its genuine Fruit. But among the Preachers of our Age, how few are there that can say they have affected the meanest Auditor with a lively Sense of the detestable Nature of Sin, and of those heavy Punishments that await it? And yet there have been known a *Jerom Savanorolla* at *Florence*, a *Lewis de Granada* at *Sevil*, and a *De Ligen-des* at *Paris*, who made whole Auditories tremble, when they open'd their Mouth on Subjects that are so terrible in their own Natures. The Prophet *Jonas* alarm'd and converted all *Nineveh* by his first Sermon of Repentance to that great City: He preach'd a voluptuous *Sardanapalus*, with his whole Court, into Sack-cloth and Ashes; and our Preachers sometimes fail of bringing over one Sinner in a whole *Leit*. The Reason is, because they preach with an Air of Indifference, and are scarce ever so serious, so melting, so vehement, as they ought to be. We read of *Philip de Narny*, a *Capucin* Fryer, under Pope *Gregory XV*, who preach'd at *Rome* with such Force of Persuasion, so powerful Action, and so frequent Zeal, that the People never went from his Sermon, without crying out for Mercy

*Dabit voci
sua vocem
virtutis.
Psal. 67.*

Mercy in the Streets. And they tell us, That preaching once before the Pope upon the Subject of Residence, he struck such a Terror into his Hearers with the Heat and Vehemence of his Discourse, that no less than thirty Bishops posted the next Day to their several Diocesses. These mighty Effects do for the most part result from an extraordinary Gift of Elocution, to which an Orator is often indebted for the Wonders he performs, especially on popular Auditories. For the Soul of the common People seems too strait and narrow, to be wrought upon by any Part of Eloquence, but that which is sensible, that is, by a warm and pathetical Address. And yet this Way of addressing, because it requires such Pains and Application as few are capable of, is but little studied by any, and by most is wholly neglected. Besides, there are few of our Preachers that preserve any kind of Gravity or Dignity in speaking; so that when they attempt to express any Affection, 'tis very often furious, and almost always indecent.

XX.

The pathetical Genius is of all the most excellent for the Pulpit, because it touches and stirs every Spring of the Soul; it has such Figures and such Movements, as captivate the Heart without glittering upon the Eye, being wholly unconcern'd as to the outward Pomp and Lustre. Those who are fitted by Nature for the pathetick Style, and are able to practise it with Success, ought to relinquish all the other Gifts of Eloquence for their Improvement and absolute Perfection of this alone.

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But then 'tis impossible to support this Character without a solid Judgment, a large Capacity, and a compleat Knowledge of Human Nature and Manners. Otherwise it is apt to fall into vain and childish Excesses, destitute of all Truth and Sense, and at length to degenerate unto extravagant Fury, and ridiculous Declamations, such as *Longinus* calls a Transport mis-tim'd and misunderstood. As a pathetical Speaker is the most unfit for Panegyrick, so the ablest Panegyrist may be at a loss in moving the Affections; these are quite different Talents; and 'tis the Remark of the same Critick, that those who want Strength and Vigour for the pathetick Style, confine themselves to the painting of the Manners, which is a much inferiour Attainment. But after all, he that will be too pathetical is in the sure way of making himself ridiculous; especially upon Subjects that won't bear him out; it being the Folly of Children to make a stir about Trifles.

*Neque in
parvis re-
bus adhi-
bendū sum
dicendi fa-
ces. Cic.
de Orat. 1.*

XX.

It is but too true, that those who design for the Church do not allow themselves sufficient time for the Exercise of Pronunciation. Their Thoughts are bent upon quite other Things; they study the Fathers, they study Rhetorick, they study the Language, but they don't study this Art of Action, which alone can have Power to quicken and animate what they say, and to give it such an Agreeableness as is necessary to engage the attention of an Audience. The neglect of this Part only, is enough to render all the others ineffectual. Not but that there are Extremes to be avoid-
ed

ed in this, as well as in other Matters. For those Preachers who would be all Passion, and who think themselves deficient if they don't Thunder in their Preface, spoil All by giving the Reins to their own exorbitant Fancy. It would be well if such Men were convinced, that by endeavouring always to move, they put themselves out of the Capacity of moving when they ought. There was, some time since, a Preacher of this Humour in *Paris*, tho' much follow'd and applauded. He had indeed an excellent Talent, and such Strokes in his Discourse as must be own'd to be very affecting; his Expression was strong; his whole Air forcible and vehement: And yet he lost all these Advantages by his too great Desire of moving, and by being very often noisy out of Season. Thus his Delivery became too impetuous, his Gesture too particular, and his Visage too scenical. In a word, his Manner was so utterly vitiated by his strain'd Grimace, and his violent Agitations of Body, that Women with Child were forbid to be of his Audience, because the Motions he us'd, were so many frightful Distortions and Convulsions. These Transports of Zeal are, with the greatest Care, to be avoided, as being always blameable when they are excessive. A Preacher ought to lay down this for a certain Rule, that he can never affect the Minds of his Hearers, if he betrays too much Design of affecting them; that a Passion of too long Continuance, is always false; and that Zeal becomes suspicious when it grows too hot, or when it appears too forward in its Discovery.

Gestus aberrat à Scenico, nec manu, nec vultu, nec excursibus nimis.
Quint. l. i.

XXI.

Some again, are only fond of pleasing, without taking any care to move: Which is another dangerous Extreme. For the Temple must not be like the Theatre, whither the Company resorts only to be diverted. The chief Aim of a Preacher should be to speak Things that are useful. But as he cannot come at this otherwise, than by the Way of Pleasure, so he should not study to please his Audience, otherwise than by moving and exciting them: For he that goes to Church with the Disposition that he ought, goes to be really influenced, and to be the better for what he hears. I know, there's a certain Vein of Fineness and good Sense, in the present Age, that cannot be without Effect. But commonly, Men are so over-solicitous of appearing agreeable, as to lose the real Fruits of Things, while they seek nothing but the Flowers. For that which pleases, naturally opens and dilates the Heart; which must recover and contract it self, ere it can be profited: And therefore we deprive our selves of what is solid, if we are too much enamour'd of what is specious and glittering. 'Tis certainly owing to this Humour, that we have some, who had much rather shew themselves witty than make their Audience wise, and who stick not to introduce any such novel Taste into the Church, as happens to be fashionable in the Age. Of this Character were certain Preachers, not long since in Vogue: They dress'd for the Pulpit, and put themselves into an Equipage to meet the Company of the Town, whom they entertain'd with a Piece of moral Gallantry, deli-

*Dedit hoc
providen-
tia homi-
nibus mu-
nus, ut ho-
nesta ma-
gis juva-
rent: sed
nos ipsa
dulcedo
longius
ducit.*

Quint. l. 1.

deliver'd with the Air of an Amour. All that can be brought home from such loose Essays, is a lightness of Thought, and dissipation of Spirit, the most opposite Thing in the World to true Devotion. What a Misfortune is it to these sparkish Preachers, that the *Gospel*, and the *Apostles*, were never thus in the Mode? How shamefully Indecent must it be to preach the severe and concerning Truths of Religion, the meekness and lowliness of Christianity, and the Scandal of the Cross, with a gay Mien and a brilliant Style: and by mixing these feeble Ornaments with the Mysteries of our Faith, to debase their Greatness and Majesty? This is the common Fault of those who preach to Men of Quality and Honour. They amuse, or compliment, those whom they ought to Terrify by convincing them, that their State is directly opposite to Salvation, and that there is not the least Footstep of the *Gospel* in the ordinary Life of a Courtier. Great Compassion ought indeed to be express'd towards those unwary Persons, who have drawn in the Poyson of an infected Air; but this should excite a Preacher with the more Plainness and Freedom to tell them the Truth. For we learn from past History, that the Court will be Christian, when Christianity is preach'd at Court; and that true Holiness may have admission into the *Presence*, if it comes by the *Chappel*.

XXII.

For the same Reason, we must conclude that Piety is an essential Qualification of a Preacher. 'Tis this that he ought to make the daily Food of his Soul, to keep up that vital Heat

*Father
Suffren
the Jesuit.*

heat of Charity and Devotion, which the Distractions of worldly Affairs would else cool and abate. This is an Accomplishment not to be attain'd, but by great Purity of Life, and by continual Exercise of Prayer and Repentance. 'Tis by the means of so happy a Disposition, that a Preacher attracts the Veneration of the People, and is capable of imprinting on their Hearts, that profound Submission and Worship that they owe to the Word of God. Such a Preacher there was, some time since, in the Court of Lewis XIII. He no sooner appear'd in the Pulpit, but the Audience was prepossess'd in his Favour: His Aspect was so singularly modest, his whole Mien and Gesture so devout, that Men were put upon serious Thoughts and Recollection, at the very Sight of him, and before he had open'd his Mouth to speak, began already to be perswaded of the Truth of what he was about to say. He deliver'd himself with so much earnest and affectionate a Piety, as communicated its Influence to the whole Congregation: His Discourse was moving, and yet solid, and in all respects, truly Christian. There shone throughout his whole Manner, a certain *Unction* of Grace and Benediction; which he obtain'd by Prayer, and Meditation, and penitential Austerities, his usual Preparation for the Pulpit. And thus, what general Success did he command? What Wonders did he not perform? So that we have here a Pattern of the true Art of Preaching. For with what Face can any Man presume to take upon him the Office of expounding God's Word, if he do not bear Testimony to it by an holy Life, and an unblameable Conversation? A Preacher's Piety may recompense all his other Imper;

Imperfections. The famous Cardinal, *Charles Borromeo*, with a weak and consumptive Habit of Body, and untunable, and almost expiring Voice, most powerfully converted his Hearers: Because they had a firm Persuasion of his Goodness and Sanctity, and that Persuasion had a stronger Effect than his Eloquence; or any other Talents could have had. Thus upon our most studious Search and Enquiry after the Eloquence of the Temple, we shall find, that Humility, Mortification, and the edifying Life of a Preacher, are the Things by which the Word of God usually operates, and becomes not barren, or unfruitful in his Mouth.

'Tis in this regard, that God forbids the wicked Man to speak of his heavenly and divine Truths, when his Life is a dishonour to those sacred Mysteries. So Impossible it is, that he whose Affections are drown'd in Sense, or chain'd down to the Earth, should, with an earnest and becoming Zeal, exhort Men to the Love of Heaven.

Peccatori dicit, Deus, quare tu enarras justitias meas, & assumis testamentum meum per os tuum? Psal. 50.

XXIII.

There are Others that miscarry, because they are too much wedded to human Prospects and Interests. They are more concern'd for their own temporal Establishment, than for the Salvation of their Hearers. They preach themselves, and not *Jesus Christ*. Such Men should be desired to consider, that the great Success which God gave to the preaching of the *Apostles*, arose chiefly, (as *St. Chrysostom* observes) from their being altogether disinterested: *St. Paul* converted whole Cities and Communities, because he made their Conversion the only End of his Sermons.

But

But so it many times falls out, that they who are able to renounce the World, and to raise themselves above all secular Hopes, have not yet Strength enough to conquer one Sort of Vanity, the Charm of Reputation. They find it exceeding difficult, not to preach themselves in preaching the *Gospel*; and after they have abandon'd all besides, cannot relinquish the Delight and Pleasure they take in being commended. To cure himself of this Weakness, a Preacher ought to be fully persuaded, that tho' all the Praises which are bestow'd on him, should be real and sincere, as they seldom are, yet he has perform'd but indifferently, when ever he leaves it in the Power of his Auditors to applaud his Performance; and that he has preach'd to no manner of Purpose, when they say he preaches finely, or agreeably: for then he has given them only a vain Satisfaction, when he should Instruct and Profit them. The greatest commendation of a Preacher, is the silence of his Auditors, when they rise pensive from their Seats, and go out of the Church without interchanging a Word. This is an Argument that they are Touch'd at the Heart, and that they seriously meditate on what they have heard. Agreeable to which, is that Reflection of *Symmachus*, in one of his Epistles to the Emperors *Theodosius* and *Arcadius*; the greatness of our *Admiration* and *Astonishment*, (says he) deprives us of all liberty to Praise. 'Twas thus that Men behav'd themselves, at the Sermons of a late famous Preacher in *Paris*, who discours'd of the great Truths of Religion, with so true Affection, and so forcible Eloquence. When he had concluded, the Astonishment, and real Compunction of his Hearers, was wont to strike them with a Silence that

*Magnitudo stuporis locum
plausibus non relinquit.* l. 1. 10.
Ep. 22.
Father
Lingendes.

that spoke loudly to his Advantage. Upon which Occasion, I cannot but take notice of an Adventure that happen'd to me some Years since. As I was hearing a Preacher that Discours'd of Persecution and Sufferings with an Air of Sprightliness and Gaiety, the Ladies, that were lifting up their Eyes to Heaven, thro' the whole Sermon, would testify their good Liking, with *O, admirably fine! O, the sweetest of Preachers!* &c. I could not observe this without Indignation, that they should find a Pleasantry, in a Subject that ought to have been fill'd with Terrors; and that the Preacher should create nothing but a vain Complacency, when he ought to have produced the most sensible Contrition and Grief.

There's another Piece of Vanity that we ought to Caution those against, who are in high Repute for powerful and melting Preachers; and that is, the attributing the Glory of this Success, when it is real, to themselves, and their own Abilities. Nothing can be more childish, than to entertain such a Conceit. They are highly engag'd, to undeceive themselves in this Point, and to remember, that when they have moved their Audience, with the greatest Effect, they have done no more than what the bare Tone of Voice, and Sound of Words can do. Our Religion assures us, that 'tis the Holy Spirit, and He alone, that works and accomplishes the rest.

XXIV.

If our Saviour heretofore, saw the evil Spirit dart himself, imperceptibly, like Lightning, into those secret Satisfaction which the *Apostles* entertain'd at the Success of their Ministry;

nistry; and if the same *Apostles*, when confirm'd in Grace by receiving the first Fruits of the holy Spirit, did yet avoid those Places where they had been most successful; that they might not be transported to any Self-complacence; can that Preacher be safe, who has too nice a Sense of Glory, too quick a relish of Applause? What is it, but to draw in a slow Poyson, thus to admit and indulge the Courtship of human Praise, in an Office so sacred, as can only bring down the Blessing of Heaven on its Labours, by the most disinterested Humility? It is always a bad Symptom, if the happy Progress of our ministerial Cares do not render us more modest and resign'd. Let us only reflect on the Conduct of *St. Paul*, when the People of *Lystra* would have paid him Extraordinary, and even divine Honours, for his Gift of Eloquence; we find him rushing in violently to forbid them; astonishing them with his resolute Opposition, lifting up his Voice, rending his Garments, obstinately disclaiming and resisting their idolatrous Design. 'Tis thus a Preacher of extraordinary Talents ought to behave himself. And if he does not strictly practise what he successfully teaches; if he is not humbled at his own Conquests and Acquisitions; that excellent Gift which procures him the Applause and Admiration of the People, will be the Source of his Miscarriage, and the Occasion of his Fall.

VIXX

It our Saviour herefore, saw the evil Spirit
in him, himself, imperceptibly, like light
into those lesser satisfactions which the
apostle condemn'd at the success of their mi-
nistry

XXXV.

XXV.

Some again deprive themselves of the good Effect of their Ministry, by relying over-much on their own Strength, and forbearing to implore, with humble Devotion, the Succour and Assistance of Heaven. Thus they are dispos'd to mix their own weak Imagination, with the sacred Greatness of religious Mysteries. Such was the Person, who having preach'd very miserably, before Cardinal Richelieu, went to compliment his Eminency after Sermon, and added at the Close, with an Air very unbecoming such an Address, that he had been oblig'd to resign himself altogether to the direction of the Holy Ghost, having had too short a Time of Preparation; but that he would not fail to prepare himself against another Opportunity, and hop'd then to do better. The Cardinal replied, with a Smile, That he might at present dispense with his Acknowledgments to the blessed Spirit, as being little indebted to him in his Discourse. There is somewhat of so sublime and august a Character in the Doctrines of Christianity, that were it honest to preach for bare Reputation, yet to deliver them in a plain artless Manner to the People, would be the surest Means of winning all the Glory and Prize of Eloquence. For he is always Eloquent that speaks great Truths, provided he speak them, with due Weight, and just Veneration.

*Suffici-
tia nostra
ex Deo est,
qui idone-
os nos fe-
cit mini-
stros novi
testamenti.
2 Cor. 5. 5.*

XXVI.

They are guilty of a great Disrespect to the Word of God, who among the many important Subjects of Religion, apply it to childish Exaggerations, and to mere Toys and Impertinence. Such, for Instance, are those puny Preachers, who declaim, with all the Fury of Zealots, against Womens Patches, or the other Vanities of their Dress. A wise and skilful Man would begin with alarming the Conscience, and proposing the Terrors of the Divine Judgments. This would be the most effectual Method for the restraining of Luxury and Extravagance, and for the introducing of Modesty in Apparel. 'Tis hence the Discourse must take its Rise; and 'twould be idle to deduce the Conclusion from any other Principle. Indeed, if we consider that Abundance of rich and noble Subjects, which the Gospel affords a Christian Orator, we must esteem it a Baseness of Spirit to submit to mean Topicks, or petty Reflections. And yet I know not by what Misfortune it comes to pass, that our Preachers sometimes appear little upon the greatest and weightiest Matters; whereas the Pagan Orators appear great, and rais'd, upon their little and worthless Occasions. I have been ashamed when I have read *Æschines's* Oration against *Ctesiphon*, where the Orator has display'd all the Art and Force of profane Eloquence about a mere Trifle. *We are now, says he, about to celebrate the Feast of the Baskets, the Sacrifices are already upon the Altars, and you are all preparing your selves to address the Gods for publick and private Blessings. But consider with what Face, with what Voice, with what*

what Mind, with what Confidence you can put up your Petitions, if these impious Men, who have been Solemnly curs'd and devoted, are yet tolerated with Impunity! This Management of so considerable a Subject, will appear to have somewhat of noble Heat and Grandour, if compar'd with the remiss and languid Manner of too many *Christian* Preachers, who instead of raising their Thought by the awful Majesty of our Mysteries, amuse themselves with little Things, as not being capable of greater. The Coldness that we may observe in Men, while treating of the most august and tremendous Objects of our Faith, is at once a Proof of their Negligence in searching and studying them, and also a just Punishment of their Indifference in being themselves unaffected with those sacred Truths which they propose for the moving and affecting others. In a Word, the grave and serious Character is essential to the Pulpit, which can suffer nothing that is frigid and childish, or that is low and trivial. To arrive at this Character, we need only to follow the Example of the *Apostle*, who instead of all curious Researches after the profane Ornaments of Style, placed all his Art, and all his Eloquence, in a continual Meditation on the Greatness of his Master, on the Majesty of *Jesus Christ*. *We have not*, (says he) *follow'd* 2 Pet. 1. *cunningly devis'd Fables, when we made known unto you the Power and Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ; but were Eye-witnesses of his Majesty.*

XXVII.

The most proper Subjects for the Pulpit, are not the sublimest, and the most illustrious, but the plainest, and the most edifying. And therefore we cannot too much discommend the vain and soppish Humour, of bright and curious Methods and quaint Distributions in Sermons, which some time since prevail'd, and met with such ample Approbation from the Fair Sex. Such was that Preacher's Division, who being to Treat of Sufferings, thought himself very fortunate, in resolving his Discourse into these two Considerations: First, *The Suffering in Pleasures*; and Secondly, *The Pleasure in Sufferings*. This affected Manner has so strong a Twang of the Declamation, that it ought by all Means to be banish'd the Church: It fails not to raise either the Pity, or Indignation of those who have any Degree of good Sense: And I could not but admire, that the conceited Division but now mentioned, should yet find some Patrons and Defenders. I apprehended, that the Gravity of the Pulpit, and the Dignity of God's Word, were incompatible with this Point and Turn; which can never be good to the Use of Edifying, tho' it may be serviceable to the Reputation of Wit. I believ'd that the severe Morals of Christianity required less Art, and more Simplicity, as proposing rather to Instruct, than Delight: And in this I dare appeal to the most Intelligent Judges. After all, lest I should offend any, that may think themselves concern'd in this Censure, I declare, that I blame nothing in these ingenious Distributions, but their Affecta-

fection; and I confess that what I cited as an Example, might have appear'd well enough if it had not been quite so trim, and so round about. But I affirm in general, that this playing upon Words, is commonly but a Flash and a false Fire of Wit, and is highly indecent in the Pulpit; and that in studied Oppositions, there is seldom any Thing solid, tho' there may be somewhat shining; that the Parts, if exactly canvass'd, will very often be found coincident, and that what appears to be two different Things, is really one and the same. Besides, a Man is always in Danger of weakening his Subject, when he is curious to give it an agreeable Turn, which would have more of Strength, if it had more of Nature. This Relish, being certainly false and declamatory, Men have, in a good Measure, abandon'd it, they are only the youthful Preachers that amuse themselves with seeking a Fineness and Nicety in branching out their Discourses. This was not the Way of *St. Chrysostom*, and other great Persons; who have agreed, that the most common Distributions are the best, because they are the most natural. The same may be pronounced of those spruce and ceremonious Entrances upon a Subject, which serve only to dazle the Fancy of the Auditors, or rather to weary their Patience. This is another Fault of young Men, who desire to shew their Parts, in these pompous Preambles, upon Concupiscence, upon original Sin, upon Grace, and other specious common Places, which belong rather to the Academy and the Declaimer, than to the Preacher and the Pulpit. 'Tis a great Mistake to imagine, that the Character of being a Wit

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enters into the Definition of an Orator; who can never succeed but by a Fund of good Sense, a Clearness of Judgment, and a Simplicity of Address.

XXVIII.

Nothing was so highly serviceable to the Apostles, in persuading Men to believe the Gospel, as their own Strictness in practising it. Their Example was a powerful Instruction; and their Preaching derived more Strength from their Humility, Mortification, and Poverty, than from their Reasoning and Discourse. Indeed, Christianity can by no better Way convince Men of its divine Original, than by the Manners of those who propound and deliver it. A Preacher's Life ought to bear Testimony to the Truth of his Doctrine: His Behaviour, his Conversation, and all his Actions ought to be blameless and irreprovable. It was the Eloquence of our Lord and Saviour, First, to do what afterwards he taught. No Man can teach with Success, that does not practise his own Lessons. A Preacher who has nothing but Words to recommend himself and his Subject by, is always insipid; and though he should speak like an Oracle, his Reasonings will scarce be allowed, when once his Morals are suspected.

*Capit fa-
cere &
docere.
Act. 1.*

XXIX.

XXIX.

One that preaches up great Strictness and Austerity with too florid a Countenance, or too light an Air, does not easily gain Profelytes to his Doctrine; because he gives Suspicion, that he does not follow it in his Practice: His Face seems to refute his Arguments. The World was lately Witness to the ill Success of him, that with all his violent Endeavour of appearing severe and terrible, was yet unable to make any Impression upon his Hearers by his Zeal and Transport, because the Rigours of his moral Precepts had not less'n'd the gross Habit of his Body: Men were inclin'd to believe his Physiognomy rather than his Logick; these zealous Preachers would do well to consider, that 'tis ridiculous to affect Severity with an Air of Jollity and Pleasure. Not but the Multitude, whose Apprehension is so confin'd, are capable of being impos'd upon; yet as to the external Part, they will not be deceiv'd, but will always judge as they see. 'Tis sometimes necessary to say little, if one would persuade much: For every Thing seems false from the Mouth of a Preacher that has the Character of amplifying. But, above all, it must be observ'd, that he who is at the same time a Preacher, and a Transgressor of the Law, is guilty of a double Offence, in not only being himself irregular, but in authorizing by his Example all the Irregularities of other Men.

*Ne vultu
destrue di-
ta tuo.
Ovid.*

XXX.

Imposui-
mus popu-
lo, oratores
wise sumus.
Cic. in
Brut.

The World is so well satisfied of the Truth of our last Reflection, that there are some Preachers who make it their common Artifice to impose upon their Audience, and to appear quite other Men than what they are. The Morals which they preach, are usually as strict and severe, as those which they practise are loose and compliant. And because they cannot support the sacred Character of being Ministers of the *Gospel*, otherwise, than by edifying the People, they constrain themselves to assume the outward Form of a rigorous Sanctity, when the Complacency they take in their present Liberties, will not suffer them to put on the real Habit. But of all these pretended Zealots, who desire to distinguish themselves, only by their Threats and Terrors from the Pulpit, the most dangerous are the fantastick Enthusiasts, made up of great Presumption and little Sense; who entertain the People with chimerical Devotions, and visionary Dreams; and without discerning what is essential in Religion, and what is not so, carry all Things to the last Extremities. I know there are some that do this very honestly, and not out of Stratagem or Design: For having naturally a strong Imagination, and a weak Judgment, they are apt quite to misconceive the Truths of the *Gospel*. Thus instead of being guided by the Understanding, they surrender to the absolute Power of Fancy, which being once heated and transported, whatever is said by Virtue of its Impression, must be alike extravagant. Preachers of this unhappy Character cannot
be

be too carefully avoided; because they may be the Authors of strange Disorder and Confusion among the People, the Women especially, by Reason of their natural Weakness: For the greater appearance of Rigor and Mortification any Preacher has, and the more transported he is in his Conduct, the more the Female Sex is wrapt in Admiration of him. This Irregularity, is but too common in our Age; as well as that other of a false and hypocritical Devotion; which has given Occasion to the passing a just Censure on those who would be known from other Men, by the peculiar Name and Profession of the Devout and Godly. But a Man can never be truly pious, that places his whole Character and Distinction in appearing to be so.

XXXI.

How many Preachers are there, that with their vehement Lectures of Reformation, shock and confound their People, instead of amending them; and in the mean while utterly forget to correct their own Imperfections in the Pulpit. They study Fathers, Divinity, and Rhetorick, and every Thing that can make them accomplish'd but themselves. Their *in* Pronunciation, their Mien, their Action, their Gesture, *Erons in pluribus generibus peccat.* so full of Indecency, and all that is disagreeable in their Address still continues; and by *Quint. Infinitum est autem in in Mc-* this Neglect of their Person, they very often *mentum, et nihil potest placere quod non deceat.* spoil and defeat their other natural Advantages, which might have rendered them useful to the World, if they would have been at the Pains of a little polishing. But how can they be so careless of themselves, without betraying *idem.*

Plutarch
in Demost.

more Unconcernedness for their Audience? Or what Deference will Men pay to their Discourse, when they pay Deference to no Man in their Behaviour? We read of an heathen Orator, that was wont to plead with a naked Sword behind him, to cure him of an unseemly Motion that he had with his Shoulder: and our Preachers give themselves up to every Thing that is grating in their Manner, and every Thing that can prejudice, or disgust their Hearers, without the least Thought or Reflection.

XXXII.

Prædicatio
mea non in
persuasibili-
bus hu-
manæ sa-
pientiæ
verbis, sed
in ostensi-
one Spiri-
tus & vir-
tutis.

1 Cor. 2.
Facient
sensus in
oratione, in
qua verba
laudantur.

Quint.
Ad Græcos
ire jubeo,
ut a fonti-
bus potius
hauriant
quàm ri-
vulos con-
sistentur.
Cic. 1.
Acad.

There's nothing that a christian Preacher ought more industriously to avoid, than what is sparkling in Expression, or even in Thought: his great Study should be, to speak always clearly and unaffectedly. The Oratory of the Temple loves Purity, without hunting after Elegance; is more desirous of Strength than of Beauty; equally declines all gross Negligence, and all studied Fineness, and ever takes more care what it Thinks, than how it Speaks. It looks upon every Thing as false, that is too glittering, and will not submit to make use of it. That vain Affectation of Language which corrupts the Purity and Sanctity of the Word of God, is in its Account, no better than Profaneness: It seeks no other Ornament of Discourse, but what is just, and plain, and natural: It much disdains the Humour of studying the *Spanish* and *Italian* Sermons, to cull out the Wit. Men lose their Time upon these Moderns, only because they are Strangers to the Antients; and hence they form a wrong Notion of this sacred Eloquence,

quence, the Character of which is quite opposite to all labour'd Politeness, and all Gaiety of Imagination. The true Eloquence of the Pulpit should endeavour to support it self only by the Greatness of its Subjects, by its Simplicity and good Sense. He that goes about to adorn it with Pagan Riches, does but weaken and disgrace it; nor ought it at any time to be mix'd with those Citations of profane Authors, or those Reflections upon their Sayings, or their Story, which are altogether unworthy of its Dignity. The holy Scriptures are an abundant Treasure of all its Beauties and Graces, and if well meditated upon, will furnish out proper Reasons and Examples for every Subject within its Compass. All other Authorities should be banish'd the Pulpit, as foreign and unsuitable to its sacred Character. A Preacher of our holy Religion ought to make a Scruple of imploying any Instruments of Discourse but what are Holy. Nor ought he ever to affect those surprizing and florid Introductions, which dazle the Audience with the Brightness of the Conceit, but are so far distant from that Spirit of Union that waits upon the Word of God, as to render this divine Word dry and barren, and deprive it of its genuine Fruits.

Non modestat tam curiosum principium. Ne sis in fronte dispersus. Ovid.

XXXIII.

To conclude, the Character that seems most essential to the Pulpit, and yet is least studied by Preachers, is the Art of turning the same Thought after a various Manner, and setting it in different Views: Because the common People, who are the major Part of an Audience, have a great Unreadiness and Difficulty

of

of apprehension. 'Tis convenient, therefore, that a Preacher who would be truly useful and instructive to his Hearers, should propound the Truths of the Gospel in such a way, as gradually to insinuate them into the Mind, that he may be able afterwards to give them their due Force and Impression upon the Heart. And there's no surer way of performing this, than by shewing any one Truth in several Lights, so as to make it enter deep into the Souls of the Auditors, by the frequent Repetition of the same thing in different Words: This was the Practice of St. *Chrysostom* amongst the Ancients, and of *Granada* among the Moderns; the two most accomplish'd Patterns of good Preaching. To hit this Character, a Discourse should not be very full of Matter, for fear of overcharging the Hearers. And therefore, that rapid kind of Eloquence with which Men of little Genius are so much charm'd, and which recommends it self only by its Impetuosity and Transport, is by no means proper for the Multitude, whose Parts are neither so ready, nor so penetrating, as to go along with it through its whole Extent and Course, and to be profited by it. After all, the best and truest Method of preaching must be that which is most capable of inspiring Men with a due Sense and high Veneration of the Word of God, XXXV.

XXXIV.

'Tis a misapplication of sacred Eloquence that some Men are guilty of, when they make use of the Ministry of the Word to condemn particular Persons from the Pulpit. A Preacher ought, in this Respect, always to speak in general,

general, and never to descend to any personal Reflections. Thus a provincial Preacher should upon no Occasion discourse of the peculiar Offices in that Province, of a Bishop, a Governour, or an Intendant, because he cannot speak of any such Charge, without pointing at him that hears it. In all the Oratory of the Pulpit, there ought to shine a distinguishing Character made up of Prudence and Christian Charity, such as shall always spare the Person, and never the Vice. 'Tis the part of Prudence to say nothing that may hurt or prejudice; and the Duty of Charity to say nothing that may offend. And therefore 'twas a mad Project of the *Spaniard*, that in a Sermon before *Philip IV*, and the Court, took the Liberty of speaking whatever came into his Head, and censuring very insolently the Person of the King himself, upon the Hope of either being made a Bishop, or being banish'd. His vain Ambition equally discover'd it self in both these so very opposite Pretensions: A Mitre would have made him great, and Banishment would have made him popular. But he was thought worthy of neither; and was punish'd as he deserv'd, that is, with an utter Contempt of his Extravagance, as below all Resentment or Notice.

XXXV.

The true Standard of Christian Preaching should be taken from the Manner of *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*, in their Sermons to the first Believers. Their Discourse is not artificially compos'd of vain and subtle Reasonings; 'tis a bare Narrative, with an Exposition of the Mystery of our Saviour's Death, and of Man's Redemption.

Redemption. It consists in a just mixture of sweetness and force, in certain peculiar Strokes of pure and natural Eloquence, in a frequent Use of the holy Scriptures, and of Examples drawn from the *Old Testament*; but especially in a secret Uñction of Grace, and in such a Devotion as is more perswasive than all the Art and Refinement of profane Rhetorick. In the *Acts of the Apostles* we have an Abridgement of these affectionate and divine Sermons, which may inspire us with noble Ideas suitable to the Greatness of our sacred and apostolical Function.

XXXVI.

The Choice of Subjects for the Pulpit, is a Thing of the utmost Importance, and yet such as is not duly consider'd. Men have an evil Custom, of going in the common Track, and saying nothing upon a Text, but what others have said before them. All the Difficulty is to form a great and noble Design; and this is what Men very seldom attempt, because they conceive Things too imperfectly, and because they entertain too low and mean an Opinion as to the Dignity of their own Office. Preachers of the first Rank know how to distinguish themselves in this Point from those of inferiour Abilities. Indeed 'tis one of the most essential Talents of a great Genius, to form great Ideas of every Subject, and to give it that natural Turn which it ought to have. For as a Subject appears noble and rais'd, only by its Solidity and Substance, so whatever passes through the Head of a Preacher, that has a sublime and solid Capacity, becomes solid and just, and whatever has that

Character

Character will look graceful in the Pulpit. But because this Talent is exceeding rare, and because the Generality of Preachers are misled into the Choice of strain'd and unnatural Subjects, they should be advis'd frequently to consult the *Greek Fathers*, St. *Basil*, and St. *Chrysostom* especially, together with St. *Gregory*, St. *Bernard*, and some others of the *Latins*, as well for the furnishing themselves with a Stock of Matter; as for framing their Designs upon these excellent Models of Antiquity, without amusing themselves with the Collections of modern Sermons, which seldom afford any real Assistance or Benefit. *Du Pont* and *Granada* may indeed supply the latter Defect: These are two great Originals, which will be always useful in giving a true Bottom to any Discourses on the Rules of Religion, or the Doctrines of Faith.

Before we shut up these Reflections upon the Eloquence of the Pulpit, it remains, that we propose some eminent Pattern, by which those who have a Genius may be able to form and finish themselves. I shall therefore subjoin the Characters of the two most accomplish'd Preachers that I have known in the present Age, it being a Rule with me not to speak of the Living. How excellent soever these two Persons may appear in the Account I shall give of them, yet those who have heard them, will acknowledge that I don't represent them greater than they were, and that I am not drawing an imaginary Piece, not describing Preachers in Idea, but Preachers in Reality, without Suspicion of amplifying the Subject, or imposing upon the Reader.

The first had the most natural Disposition for Eloquence, that has ever fallen under my
 Observation: Father
Delingen-
des.

Observation: His Person was well-made; he had a becoming Modesty and Gravity, an agreeable Aspect, and every Thing that is either great or graceful in his Appearance: He gain'd Respect and Deference by paying the same to his Hearers; his Voice was not the most bright and tuneable, yet had its Fulness, and Compass, and Strength, and somewhat so very taking, as to engage the greatest Earnestness of Attention, whenever he began to speak. The Endowments of his Mind were every way answerable to these outward Advantages: He had a deep Penetration and exquisite Understanding, a strong Reason, an easy Apprehension, a fine Imagination, and solid Judgment: His Learning consisted in a perfect Knowledge of Divinity, in which he was superiour to most Professors, and which enabled him to speak decisively, and with true Weight of all the Points that came before him: To this Knowledge in theological Studies he had join'd an exact Acquaintance with the Fathers, whom he made use of with so happy and familiar Address, as if they had written only for his Service. But nothing so much rais'd the Lustre of these excellent Qualities, as that admirable Gift of Eloquence, which he imploy'd with so much Success, in fixing what Impressions he pleas'd upon Men's Minds, by the Turn he gave to every Thing he said. The Parts so well supported each other in the whole Chain of his Reasonings, that those which follow'd were always stronger than those which went before; and, besides that his Arguments were thoroughly good and solid, and had nothing false, nothing wide or foreign from his Purpose, the Power of his Discourse seem'd gradually to increase,

so as to strike with much greater force towards the End than at the Beginning. In a Word, his true Talent was fully to convince the Understanding, and yet more strongly to influence the Will. His whole Sermon was a wonderful Illustration of his Subject; and after he had cast into the Soul the Seed of those Motions that he design'd to raise by his abundant and overflowing Sense, he then set all its Springs on going by the several Engines that he thought capable of working it into any Temper; at the same time inflaming the Heart with all the Ardour and Vehemence of the Affections, of which he was a great Master, by the help of a peculiar Rhetorick that he had fram'd to himself. It was then that the Company began to hear him with a new Pleasure, while the Charms of his Eloquence let him secretly into their good Opinion; and they never so eagerly wish'd he might proceed, as when he was upon the Point of concluding. For this was the Time that he made his Entrance upon their Hearts, and rendred them at his absolute Disposal. He had the Gift of this pathetical Way of Perswasion in so eminent a Degree, that I have known Libertines who forbore his Sermons, for fear of being oblig'd to yield to the Force of his Arguments; for barely to hear him was to be his Prisoner at Discretion. Yet nothing spoke so loud in his Praise, as the profound Silence of his Auditors when he ended his Discourse. One might see them rising from their Seats with fix'd Eyes, and with Paleness and Dejection in their Countenance, and going out of the Church pensive and concern'd, without uttering a Word; especially when he had been upon a moving Subject, and had found means of exciting

citing Terror, which he was wont to do upon most Occasions, being convinced of the Truth of Quintilian's Maxim, *Naturaliter plus valet apud plurimos malorum timor, quam spes bonorum*: Most Men are naturally less affected with the Hope of Good, than with the Fear of Evil. Hence he used to say, That a Preacher ought, almost in all Cases, to appear terrible, and this was his own true Character. But as he was sometimes indispos'd with Humour and the Spleen, from which the greatest among Men are not exempt, he now and then fell into such Heaviness of Spirit, as would scarce have been pardonable; if not recompens'd by that moving and affectionate Air, which was his principal Excellence.

Father
Castillon.

The other Preacher, whom I knew, had all the Genius, and I may venture to say, all the Learning and Abilities of the former, but then he had a very different Manner. I never observ'd in any Orator either more Art, or more Diligence in concealing his Art. Under an Air of Simplicity and Negligence, he disguis'd the greatest Accuracy and Management that perhaps ever was. This very Negligence was attended with so many Graces, that he never fail'd to charm his Hearers; because by his way of Delivery they judg'd him to have no Design upon them, and no Opinion of his own Power to charm. His sovereign Talent was the happy Secret he had found out of making all his Art pass for Nature, by covering it over with the most studied and elaborate Neglect; and the commonest Things he said had so free and easy an Air, as to appear different from all that was said by other Men. His Discourses that cost him the greatest Pains and Thought, were receiv'd as Things spoken off-hand,

off-hand, by the help of a strong and lively Imagination, without any premeditated Care. And thus Men were easily dispos'd to yield and resign themselves entirely to the Pleasure of hearing him; they went to his Sermons without any previous Concern, or the least suspicion of his ill Success. As his Reasons were truly substantial, and as he knew how to set them out in all their Strength, so they could not but strike a deep Impression upon the Understanding; but still his Manner of uttering them was so very agreeable, as to surprize, and even to enchant the Heart and Affections. This was the ordinary Effect of his Eloquence, which consisted less in the Words, and in the Thoughts, than in the Manner of thinking and speaking. So that having the Art of Pleasing in all that he said, and of making Men feel themselves conquer'd by the new Graces of every Part, he was in all Points eloquent, because he was at all times perswasive. He knew how to temper the Force of Reasoning with that of Authority and Example, in the most engaging Way, and such as made every Thing come beautiful out of his Hands. Infomuch, that he led on, as it were Step by Step, the Souls of his Hearers, into every Motion, and every Desire, there being no Guard against the Charms of his Discourse. His Morality was true and exact, because he had an Exactness of good Sense: All his Subjects were great and rais'd, by means of those high and important Truths still interwoven with them. There was nothing false in his Conceptions, nothing superfluous in his Expression; and if at any time he left his Subject, yet he never lost Sight of it. By this sweet and agreeable Method he gain'd a more direct and immediate

I

diat Passagē to the Heart than the other Gentleman, who took a larger Compass in reaching the Affections by the Way of the Understanding. Indeed we were more struck and mov'd by the Force and Vehemence of the former; but we were more charm'd, more soften'd and melted, by all the Graces and all the Sweetness of the latter. But they were both absolutely accomplish'd in the Character which they chose, and in the Eloquence which they pursued; and their printed Sermons are still the best Attestations of their Worth.

A Preacher of so perfect a Character as the two, whose chief Features I have here trac'd out, is one of the greatest Gifts of God to his Church, as a Means of sanctifying whole Provinces and Kingdoms, by restraining the publick Licentiousness, and reforming the Manners of the People. This is that holy *Salv*, spoken of in Scripture, which by the Care of the divine Providence prevails against all the Corruptions of the World. And I believe there is one Cause still behind, to which we may ascribe the present scarcity of good Preachers. I mean our neglect of praying to God for those Graces which we cannot beg with too much Zeal and Importunity. Let us therefore not cease to weep before his holy Altar; and let us with a lively Faith, with ardent Vows, and with constant Perseverance, humbly offer to Him that Prayer which our Lord enjoin'd his Apostles, and in their Persons, for ever prescrib'd to his Church: *The Harvest truly is great, but the Labourers are few: Pray ye therefore the Lord of the Harvest, that he would send forth Labourers into his Harvest.*

Monfieur *RAPIN*'s
REFLECTIONS

ON

Aristotle's Treatife

OF

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WITH

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Made *English* by Mr. *Rymer*: By whom are added
some *Reflections* on *English* POETS.

L O N D O N:

Printed in the Year MDCCXVI.

Montagu R. A. P. L. N. S.
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By Mr. R. A. P. L. N. S.
LONDON: Printed by J. D. B. 1712.

THE
PREFACE
OF THE
TRANSLATOR.

THE Artist would not take Pains to polish a Diamond, if none besides himself were quick-sighted enough to discern the Flaw: And Poets would grow negligent, if the Criticks had not a strict Eye over their Miscarriages. Yet it often happens, that this Eye is so distorted by Envy or Ill-nature, that it sees nothing aright. Some Criticks are like Wasps, that rather annoy the Bees, than terrifie the Drones.

For this Sort of Learning, our neighbour Nations have got far the Start of us; in the last Century, *Italy* swarm'd with Criticks, where amongst many of less Note, *Castelvetro* opposed all Comers; and the famous Academy *La Crusca* was always impeaching some or other of the best Authors. *Spain*, in those Days, bred great Wits, but, I think was never so crowded, that they needed to fall out and quarrel amongst themselves. But from *Italy*, *France* took the Cudgels; and tho' some light Strokes passed in the Days of *Marot*, *Bais*, &c. Yet they fell not to it in earnest, nor was

any noble Contest amongst them, till the *Royal Academy* was founded, and Cardinal *Richelieu* encouraged and rallied all the scattered Wits under his Banner. Then *Malherb* reform'd their ancient licentious *Poetry*; and *Corneille's Cid* rais'd many Factions amongst them. At this time with us many great Wits flourished; but *Ben. Johnson*, I think, had all the critical Learning to himself; and till of late Years, *England* was as free from Criticks, as it is from *Wolves*, that a harmless well-meaning Book might pass without any Danger. But now this Privilege, whatever extraordinary Talent it requires, is usurp'd by the most Ignorant: And they who are least acquainted with the Game, are aptest to bark at every thing that comes in their Way. Our Fortune is, *Aristotle*, on whom our Author makes these *Reflections*, came to this great Work better accomplish'd. He who criticis'd on the ancient and his contemporary Philosophers; on *Pythagoras*, *Democritus*, *Empedocles*, *Heraclitus*, *Epicharmus*, *Parmenides*, *Xenophanes*, *Melissus*, *Anaxagoras*, *Protagoras*, *Eudoxus*, *Solon*, *Anaximander*, *Anaximenes*, *Plato*, *Speusippus*; who examin'd and censur'd the *Laws* and *Polities* of *Minos*, *Lycurgus*, *Solon*, *Hyppodamus*, *Phaleas*, and all the other Common-wealths; 'tis he, I say, that undertakes this Province, to pass a Judgment on the *Poets*, and their Works; and him Antiquity first honoured with the Name of *Critick*.

It is indeed suspected that he dealt not always fairly with the Philosophers, mis-reciting sometimes, and mis-interpreting their Opinions. But I find him not tax'd of that Injustice to the *Poets*, in whose Favour he is so ingenious, that to the Disadvantage of his

own Profession, he declares, *That Tragedy more conduces to the Instruction of Mankind, than even Philosophy it self.* And however cry'd down in the Schools, and vilified by some modern Philosophers; since Men have had a Taste for good Sense, and could discern the Beauties of correct Writing, he is prefer'd in the *politest Courts of Europe*, and by the *Poets* held in great Veneration. Not that these can servilely yield to his Authority, who, of all Men living, affect Liberty. The Truth is, what *Aristotle* writes on this Subject, is not the Dictates of his own magisterial Will, or dry Deductions of his Metaphysics: But the Poets were his Masters, and what was their Practice, he reduced to Principles. Nor would the *modern Poets* blindly resign to this Practice of the *Antients*, were not the Reasons convincing and clear as any Demonstration in *Mathematicks*. 'Tis only needful that we understand them, for our Consent to the Truth of them. The *Arabians*, 'tis confess'd, who glory in their Poets and Poetry, more than all the World besides; and who, I suppose, first brought the Art of Rhiming into *Europe*, observe but little these Laws of *Aristotle*: Yet *Averroes* rather On *Arist.* chooses to blame the Practice of his Country- de *Poet.* men as vicious, than to allow any Imputation on the Doctrine of this *Philosopher* as imperfect. Fancy with them is predominant, is wild, vast and unbridled, over which their Judgment has little Command or Authority: Hence their Conceptions are monstrous, and have nothing of Exactness, nothing of Resemblance or Proportion.

The Author of these Reflections is as well known amongst the Criticks, as *Aristotle* to the *Philosophers*: Never Man gave his Judgment so generally,

generally, and never was Judgment more free and impartial. He might be thought an Enemy to the *Spaniards*, were he not as sharp on the *Italians*; and he might be suspected to envy the *Italians*, were he not as severe on his own Countrymen. These Nations make it a Problem, whether a *Dutchman* or *German* may be a Wit or no; and our Author finds none worthy of his Censure amongst them, except *Heinsius* and *Grotius*. Amongst us he gives *Buchanan* a particular Character: But for such as writ in the *English* Tongue, he has not, I presume, understood the Language so well, to pass a Judgment on them; only in general he confesses, that we have a Genius for Tragedy above all other People; one Reason he gives we cannot allow of, viz. *The Disposition of our Nation, which, he saith, is delighted with cruel Things.* 'Tis ordinary to judge of People's Manners and Inclinations by their publick Diversions; and Travellers, who see some of our Tragedies, may conclude us certainly the cruellest minded People in *Christendom*.

In another Place this Author says of us, *That we are Men in an Island, divided from the rest of the World, and that we love Blood in our Sports.* And perhaps, it may be true, that on our Stage are more Murders than on all the Theatres in *Europe*. And they who have not time to learn our Language, or be acquainted with our Conversation, may there in three Hours Time behold so much Blood shed as may affright them from the inhospitable Shore, as from the Cyclops Den. Let our Tragedy-makers consider this, and examine whether it be the Disposition of the People, or their own *Caprice*, that brings this Censure on the best-natur'd Nation under the Sun.

His

His other Reason is our Language, which he says, is proper for great Expressions. The Spanish is big and fastuous, proper only for Rhodomontades, and compar'd with other Languages, is like the Kettle-drum to Musick.

The Italian is fittest for Burlesque, and better becomes the Mouth of Petrolin and Arloquin in their Farces, than any heroick Character. The perpetual Termination in Vowels is childish, and themselves confess, rather sweet than grave.

The French wants Sinews for great and heroick Subjects, and even in Love-matters, by their own Confession, is a very Infant; the Italians *Mesnard* call it the Kitchen-language, it being so copious *dire & al.* and flowing on those Occasions. *Lenga di*

The German still continues rude and unpolish'd, not yet filled and civilized by the Commerce and Intermixture with Strangers to that Smoothness and Humanity which the English may boast of. *Masserini*

The dissyllable Rhimes force the Italians and Spaniards on the *Stanza* in Heroicks; which, besides many other Disadvantages, renders the Language unfit for Tragedy.

The French now only use the long Alexandrins, and would make up in Length, what they want in Strength and Substance; yet are they too faint and languishing, and attain not that numerosity which the Dignity of heroick Verse requires, and which is ordinary in an English Verse of ten Syllables. But I shall not here examine the Weight, the Fulness, the Vigour, Force, Gravity, and the Fitness of the English for heroick Poësie, above all other Languages; the World *Sbering-* expecting these Matters learnedly and largely *ham.* discussed in a particular Treatise on that Subject.

But from our Language I proceed to our Writers, and with the Freedom of this Author,
exa-

*Bellay.
Pasquier
prefers
him to
the best
of Italy.*

examine how unhappy the greatest *English* Poets have been, through their Ignorance or Negligence of these fundamental Rules and Laws of *Aristotle*. I shall leave the Author of the *Romance of the Rose* (whom Sir Richard Baker makes an *Englishman*) for the *French* to boast of, because he writ in their Language. Nor shall I speak of *Chaucer*, in whose Time our Language, I presume, was not capable of any heroick Character. Nor indeed was the most polite Wit of *Europe*, in that Age, sufficient for a great *Design*. That was the Age of *Tales*, *Ballads*, and *Roundelays*. *Petrarch* in those Days, attempted the *Epick* Strain in his *Africa*; but, though most happy in his *Sonnets* and *Madrigals*, was far too feeble for a Work of that Weight and Importance.

Spencer, I think, may be reckon'd the first of our *heroick Poets*; he had a large Spirit, a sharp Judgment, and a *Genius* for *heroick Poesie*, perhaps above any that ever writ since *Virgil*. But our Misfortune is, he wanted a true *Idea*; and lost himself, by following an unfaithful Guide. Though besides *Homer* and *Virgil*, he had read *Tasso*, yet he rather suffer'd himself to be misled by *Ariosto*; with whom blindly rambling on *marvellous* Adventures, he makes no Conscience of *Probability*. All is fanciful and chimerical, without any Uniformity, without any Foundation in Truth; his Poem is perfect *Fairy-land*.

They who can love *Ariosto*, will be ravish'd with *Spencer*; whilst Men of juster Thoughts lament, that such great Wits have miscarried in their Travels, for want of Direction to set them in the right Way. But the Truth is, in *Spencer's* Time, *Italy* itself was not well satisfied with *Tasso*, and few amongst them would

would then allow that he had excell'd their *divine Ariosto*. And it was the Vice of those Times to affect superstitiously the *Allegory*; and nothing would then be current without a mystical Meaning. We must blame the *Italians* for debauching great *Spencer's* Judgment; and they cast him on the unlucky Choice of the *Stanza*, which in no wise is proper for our Language.

The next for *epick Poësie*, is Sir *William D'avenant*: His Wit is well known; and in the Preface to his *Gondibert*, appear some Strokes of an extraordinary Judgment. He is for *unbeaten Tracks*, and *new Ways of Thinking*; but certainly in his *untry'd Seas* he is no great Discoverer.

One Design of the *epick Poets* before him, was to adorn their own Country, there finding their *Heroes*, and Patterns of Vertue; whose Example (as they thought) would have greatest Influence and Power over Posterity; but this Poet steers a different Course, his *Heroes* are all Foreigners; He cultivates a Country that is nothing akin to him, 'tis *Lombardy* that reaps the Honour of all.

Other Poets chose some *Action* or *Hero* so illustrious, that the Name of the Poem prepared the Reader, and made Way for its reception: But in this Poem none can divine what *great Action* he intended to celebrate; nor is the Reader obliged to know, whether the *Hero* be *Turk* or *Christian*. Nor do the first Lines give any Light or Prospect into his *Design*. Methinks, though his Religion could not dispense with an *Invocation*, he needed not to have scrupled at the *Proposition*: Yet he rather chooses to enter in at the Top of an House, because the Morals of *mean* and *satisfied*

Et Pater
Aeneas &
Avuncu-
lus excoiet
Hector.

fiel Minds go in at the Door. And, I believe, the Reader is not well pleas'd to find his Poem begin with the Praises of *Aribert*, when the Title had promised a *Gondibert*. But before he falls on any other Business, he presents the Reader with a Description of each particular *Hero*, not trusting their *Actions* to speak for them, as former Poets had done. Their Practice was fine and artificial; his (he tells us) is a *new Way*. Many of his Characters have but little of the *Heroick* in them; *Dalga* is a Jilt, proper only for *Comedy*; *Birtha* for a *Pastoral*; and *Astragon*, in the Manner here described, yields no very great Ornament to an *heroick Poem*; nor are his Battles less liable to Censure, than those of *Homer*.

He dares not, as other *heroick Poets*, heighten the *Action*, by making Heaven and Hell interested, for fear of offending against *Probability*; and yet he tells of

— *Threads by patient Parcæ slowly spun:*

And for being dead, his Phrase is,

‘*Heav’n call’d him, where peacefully he rules a Star.*

And the *Emerald* he gives to *Birtha*, has a stronger *Tang* of the old Woman, and is a greater *Improbability* than all the Enchantments in *Tasso*. A just *Medium* reconciles the farthest Extremes, and due Preparation may give Credit to the most unlikely Fiction. In *Marino*, *Adonis* is presented with a *Diamond Ring*, where indeed, the Stone is much-what of the same Nature: But this Present is made by *Venus*: and from a *Goddeß*, could not be expected a Gift of ordinary Vertue.

Altho’

Altho' a Poet is oblig'd to know all Arts and Sciences, yet he ought discreetly to manage this Knowledge. He must have Judgment to select what is noble or beautiful, and proper for his Occasion. He must, by a particular Chymistry, extract the Essence of Things, without soiling his Wit with the Gross and Trumpery. But some Poets labour to appear skilful with that wretched Affectation, they dote on the very Terms and Jargon; exposing themselves rather to be laugh'd at by the Apprentices, than to be admir'd by Philosophers: But whether *D'avenant* be one of those, I leave others to examine.

The Sort of Verse he makes choice of, might, I suppose, contribute much to the vitiating of his Stile; for thereby he obliges himself to stretch every Period to the End of four Lines. Thus the Sense is broken perpetually with *Parentheses*, the Words jumbled in Confusion, and a Darkness spread over all; that the Sense is either not discern'd, or found not sufficient for one just Verse, which is sprinkled on the whole *Tetrasick*.

In the *Italian* and *Spanish*, where all the Rhimes are dissyllable, and the Percussion stronger, this Kind of Verse may be necessary; and yet to temper that grave March, they repeat the same Rhime over again, and then they close the *Stanza* with a *Couplet* further to sweeten the Severity. But in *French* and *English*, where we Rhime generally with only one Syllable, the *Stanza* is not allow'd, much less the *alternate* Rhime in long Verse; for the Sound of the monosyllable Rhime is either lost 'ere we come to its Correspondent, or we are in Pain by the so long Expectation and Suspense.

This

This alternate Rhime, and the down-right Morality throughout whole *Canto's* together, shew him better acquainted with the *Quatrains of Pybrack*, which he speaks of, than with any true Models of *epick Poesie*.

After all, he is said to have a particular Talent for the *Manners*; his Thoughts are great, and there appears something roughly noble throughout this Fragment; which, had he been pleas'd to finish it, would, doubtless, not have been left so open to the Attack of Criticks.

A more happy Genius for *heroick Poesie*, appears in Cowley. He understood the *Purity*, the *Perspicuity*, the *Majesty* of Stile, and the *Virtue of Numbers*. He could discern what was beautiful and pleasant in Nature, and could express his Thoughts without the least Difficulty or Constraint. He understood to dispose of the Matters, and to manage his Digressions. In short, he understood *Homer* and *Virgil*, and as prudently made his Advantage of them.

Yet, as it may be lamented, that he carried not on the Work so far as he design'd, so it might be wish'd that he had liv'd to revise what he did leave us: I think the Troubles of *David* is neither Title nor Matter proper for an *heroick Poem*; seeing it is rather the Actions than his Sufferings, that make an *Hero*: Nor can it be defended by *Homer's Odysseis*, since *Ulysses's* Sufferings conclude with one great and perfect Action.

After all the heavy Censures that jointly from all Criticks have fallen on *Lucan*, I do a little wonder that this Author should chuse *History* for the Subject of his Poem, and a History where he is so strictly ty'd up to the Truth: *Aristotle* tells us, That Poetry is something more
 excel-

excellent, and more philosophical than History, and does not inform us what has been done, but teaches what may, and what ought to be done. And since many Particulars in sacred Story are neither *heroick*, nor indeed consistent with the common Principles of Morality, but of a singular, extraordinary, and unaccountable Dispensation; and since in the principal Actions all is carried on by *Machine*, how can these Examples be propos'd for great Persons to imitate? or what Foundations for their Hopes in *Impossibilities*? Poetry has no Life, nor can have any Operation without *Probability*: It may indeed amuse the People, but moves not the *Wise*, for whom alone (according to *Pythagoras*) *Ἀείω* it is ordain'd. *οὐκ ἐταίς, &c. Stob.*

Instead of one *illustrious* and *perfect Action*, which properly is the Subject of an *epick* Poem, *Cowley* proposes to adorn some several Particulars of *David's* Life; and these Particulars have no necessary Relation to the End, nor in any wise lead to the great Revolution: *David* is made King, but this is the Work of Heaven, not any Atchievement of his own. He neither did, nor ought to lift a Finger for gaining the Crown: He is among the *Amalekites* whilst his Work is done without him. This ill Choice of a Subject forces the Poet (how excellent otherwise soever) perpetually on Digressions; and *David* is the least Part of the Poem.

Some, perhaps, may object, That he begins not his Poem with all the Art and Address as might be desired. *Homer* would make us believe the drawing of *Achilles*, adorn'd with all his glorious Actions, a Design too vast and impossible; and therefore only proposes his *Resentment* of the Affront given him by *Agamemnon*; as if any
one

one Particular of his Life were sufficient to employ the greatest human Wit, with all its *Muses* and divine Assistance. *Achilles* could not be angry, but Heaven and Earth are engaged, and just Matter given for an *heroick* Poem. Thus whilst he proposes but one Passage, we conceive a greater *Idea* of the rest than any Words could express; and whilst he promises so little, his Performances are the more admirable and surprizing. But in the *Davidis* we have all the *Hero* at the first: In the Proposition, he is the *best Poet*, and is the *best King*. Now all the Author could do afterwards, is only to make good his Word, and make us conceive of his *Hero* the same *Idea* at the End of the Poem, which was given us in the Beginning; whereas *Homer* calls the Man he designs to celebrate barely *Achilles*, Son of *Peleus*, and recording his Actions, leaves others to conclude from them what a great Captain, Prince, and Hero, this *Achilles* was.

Tasso left the *Episode* of *Sophonia* out of his Poem, because it was *Troppo Lyrico*.

Yet Mr. *Cowley* is not content to mix *Matters* that are purely *lyrical* in this *heroick* Poem, but employs the *Measures* also.

Yet, notwithstanding what has been said, we cannot now approve the Reason (which Sir *Philip Sidney* gives) why Poets are less esteem'd in *England*, than in the other famous Nations; to be *Want of Merit*: nor be of their Opinion, who say, that *Wit* and *Wine* are not of the Growth of our Country. Valour they allow us; but what we gain by our Arms, we lose by the Weakness of our Heads: Our good *Ale*, and *English Beef*, they say, may make us *Soldiers*; but are no very good Friends to *Speculation*. Were it proper here to handle this

Argu-

Argument, and to make Comparisons with our Neighbours, it might easily by our Poetry be evinc'd, that our *Wit* was never inferiour to theirs, though, perhaps our *Honesty* made us worse Politicians. Wit and Valour have always gone together, and Poetry been the Companion of Camps. The Hero and Poet were inspired with the same Enthusiasm, acted with the same Heat, and both were crown'd with the same *Laurel*. Had our Tongue been as generally known, and those who felt our Blows understood our Language, they would confess, that our Poets had likewise done their Part, and that our Pens had been as successful as our Swords. And certainly, if Sir *Philip Sidney* had seen the Poets who succeeded him, he would not have judg'd the *English* less deserving than their Neighbours. In the *Davidis* Fragment (and imperfect as it is) there shines something of a more fine, more free, more new, and more noble *Air*, than appears in the *Hierusalem* of *Tasso*, which for all his Care, is scarce perfectly purg'd from *Pedantry*. But in the *lyrick Way* however, *Cowley* far exceeds him, and all the rest of the *Italians*: Tho' *Lyrick* Poesie is their principal Glory, and Pope *Urban VIII* had the Honour, a little before him, to enrich modern Poesie with the *Pindarick* Strains. Many the greatest Wits of *France* have attempted the *Epick*, but their Performance answer'd not Expectation; our Fragments are more worth than their finish'd Pieces: And though, perhaps, want of Encouragement has hinder'd our Labours in the *Epick*, yet for the *Drama*, the World has nothing to be compared with us. But a Debate of this Importance is not the Work of a Preface; I shall only here, on the behalf of our

English Poetry, give one single Instance, and leave the *Reader* to judge of *Hercules* by his *Foot*.

Amongst the *common Places* (by which *Scaliger*, and before him *Macrobius*, *Agellius* and the other Criticks have compared the Poets, and examin'd their *Worth*) none has been more generally, and more happily handled, and in none have the noblest Wits, both ancient and modern, more contended with each other for Victory, than in the *Description of the Night*. Yet in this the *English* has the Advantage, and has even out-done them where they have out-done themselves. The first I meet with, who had the *lucky Hit*, is *Apollonius* in his *Argonautiques*.

Νύξ μὲν ἔπειτ' ὅππ' ἡ γαῖαν ἄγει κνέφας, οἶδ' ἐνὶ τόνῳ
 Ναῦται εἰς ἐλικλῶ τε καὶ ἀσέρας ὠρίων
 Ἐδρακὸν ἐκ νηῶν, ὑπνοιο τε καὶ τις ὀδύτης
 Ἥδη καὶ Ἰουλαῶρες ἐέκδ' ἐτο, καὶ τινα παίδων
 Μπότερ τε θνέστων ἀδινὸν περ κῶμ' ἐκάλυπτον.
 Οὐδ' ἐκινῶν ὑλακὴ ἔτ' ἀνὰ πτόλι, ἢ θρόνον
 Ἥχης, σιγὴν δ' ἢ μελαινομήδην ἔχεν ὄφρυον.
 Ἀλλὰ μάλ' ἐμήδ' ἔπειτ' ὅππ' ἡ γλυκερὸς λάβεν ὕπνον.

Here we have Variety of Matter, yet rather *many* than *choice* Thoughts. He gives us the Face of Things both by Land and Sea, City and Country, the Mariner, the Traveller, the Door-keeper, the Mistress of the Family, her Child and Dog; but loses himself amongst his Particulars, and seems to forget for what Occasion he mentions them. He would say, that all the World is fast asleep, but only *Medea*; and then his Mariners, who are gazing from their Ships on *Helice* and *Orion*, can serve but little for his Purpose; unless they may be supposed to sleep with their Eyes open. Neither dares

dares he say, that the Traveller and Porter are yet taking a Nap, but only that they have a good Mind to't. And after all, we find none but the good Woman, who had lost her Child (and she indeed is fast) asleep, unless the Dogs may likewise be supposed so, because they had left off barking. And these, methinks, were scarce worthy to be taken notice of in an *Heroick Poem*, except we may believe that in the *Old Time*, or that in *Greek* they bark heroically. *Scaliger*, as his manner is, to prefer *Virgil*, calls this Description mean and vulgar. *Virgil* well saw the Levity and Trifling of the *Greeks*, and from him we may expect something better digested.

*Nox erat, & placidum carpebant fessa soporem
Corpora per terras, sylvaeque & seva quierant
Æquora, cum medio volvuntur sydera lapsu:
Cum tacet omnis ager, pecudes, pictaeque volucres
Quæque lacus late liquidos, quæque aspera dumis
Rura tenent, somno posita sub nocte silenti
Lenibant curas, & corda oblita laborum.*

[Æn. I. 4.]

Against this may be objected, That Sleep being of such a soft and gentle Nature, that 'tis said to steal upon our Senses, the Word [*carpebant*] suits but ill with it; this Word seeming to imply a Force, and might rather express the Violence of Robbers, than the Slyness of a Thief. Nor can it be pretended that [*sopor*] signifies a Kind of violent and snoring Sleep, for here we have it *placidum soporem*. Instead of *Woods* and *Seas*, *Tasso* rather chuses to join *Winds* and *Seas*, as of a nearer Relation, and going more naturally together; the Commentators being certainly mistaken, who

would have a *Metonymy* in this Place. The third Verse I can scarce believe legitimate: The *Words* speak nothing but Motion, and the *Numbers* are so ratling, that nothing can be more repugnant to the general Repose and Silence which the Poet describes: Or, if any Copies might favour the Conjecture, I should rather read

— Cum medio librantur sydera cursu.

For, nothing can be more poetical, than to suppose the Stars rest (as it were pois'd) in their Meridian; and this would not only express it to be Midnight, but heighten the Poet's Design, which by the common reading is absolutely destroy'd. The fifth Line seems to bear a doubtful Face, and looks not unlike something of Equivocation: An ordinary *Grammarians* would seek no further than the Antecedent [*vulures*] to refer these Relatives to, and might construe Wild Ducks, and Woodcocks, what the Poet intended for *Fish* in the Sea, and the *Wild Beasts* of the Forest.

Besides this, I find none amongst the *Latins* that deserve to be brought into Comparison. In the *Italian*, *Ariosto* (whose every Description is said to be a *Master-Piece*) in this is not over-fortunate; he is easy and smooth, but produces nothing of his own Invention. He only enlarges on a Thought of *Virgil's*, which yet he leaves without that *Turn* which might give it Perfection. What I think is more considerable, is this of *Tasso*.

Era la notte all'hor, ch' alto riposo
Han l'onde, e i venti, e pareva muto il mondo:

Gli animai lassi, e quei, che 'l mar ondofo,
 O de' liquidi laghi alberga il fondo,
 E chi si giace in tana, o in man dra ascoso
 E i pinti augelli ne l' oblio profondo,
 Sotto il silentio de secreti horrori,
 Sopian gli affanni, e raddolciano i cori.

Tasso, when he reform'd his Poem, could mend nothing in this Description, but repeats it entire in his *Hierusalem Liberata*, without any Alteration. 'Tis well nigh Word for Word taken out of *Virgil*, and (to give it its due) is a most excellent Translation. He most judiciously leaves out that *Hemestick*, *volvuntur sydera lapsu*, the Place whereof is (perhaps from *Statius*) supply'd with *purea muta il mondo*. Yet on the other hand here seems to be some superfluity of Fish; those in the Sea, and those at the bottom of the Lakes, are more by half than *Virgil*, or, perhaps, than Tasso had occasion for in this Place.

Achillei-
 dos, l. 1.
*mutumque
 amplecti-
 tur orbem.*

But that we may have something new from the *Italians* on this Subject, *Marino* has taken Care in his *Adonis*, Canto 13.

Notte era, allhor che dal diurna moto
 Ha requie ogni pensier, tregna ogni duolo,
 L'onde giacean, tacean Zefiro, e Noto,
 E cedeva il quadrante a l' horivolo,
 Sopra l' huom la fatica, il pesce il nuoto,
 La fera il Corso, e l' augelletto il volo.
 Aspettando il tornar del novo lume
 Tra l' alghe, o tra rami, o su le piume.

In these we have more of the Fancy, than of the Judgment; variety of Matter, rather than exquisite Sense. *Marino* is perfectly himself throughout; the *Thoughts diurnal Motion*,
 K 3 I fear,

I fear, will scarce pass for a very pathetic Expression; nor will it satisfy, that he makes *Zephyrus* and the *South-Wind* silent; if he particularize these, he should also name the rest, otherwise the *East Wind* and *Boreas* have leave to bluster. But, above all, he tells us, That the *Clocks* have got the better of the *Sun-Dials*. A Thought purely new, and strangely heroick: What could come more sudden or surprizing? In the latter part of the *Stanza* we have some Strokes of *Ariosto*, but far more lame and imperfect than the Original. Neither ought he in this Place to speak of any expecting the Return of the Light, *omnia noctis erant*.

But I hasten to the *French*, amongst whom none more eminent than *Chapelain*, nor was ever a Poem of greater Expectation. His Description is thus:

*Cependant la nuit vole, & sous son aile obscure
Invite a sommeiller l'agissante Nature,
Dans les plains des airs tient les vents en repos,
Et sur les champs sales fait reposer les flots,
A tout ce qui se meut, a tout ce qui respire
Dans les pres, dans les bois le repos elle inspire,
Elle suspend par tout les travaux & les bruits,
Et par tout dans les cœurs assoupit les ennuis.
Charles seul esveille—*

This Description is perfect *French*. There is scarce any coming at a little Sense, 'tis so encompass'd about with Words. What *Virgil* or *Tasso* would have dispatched in half a Verse, here fills out the Measures of two whole *Alexandrins*.

Some Caviller would object, That since the *Night* flies, there is little Sleep to be got under her Wing, unless for such as can Walk

in their Sleep: And that the *Night* might have spared this *Invitation*, seeing those she invites are asleep already: *Charles alone is awake*, and for that Reason, was the only Thing fit to be invited; and doubtless the *Night* was as free of her Invitation to him, as to any others, 'twas his Fault that he had no Stomach to it. And here is much Power given to the *Night*, which she has no Claim or Title to; 'tis not the *Night* that makes the *Waves and Winds*, and all the Things that *move and breath in Meads and Woods to repose*. She only invites them to sleep, and it is Sleep that makes them rest. In the space of four Lines we meet with *repos*, *reposer*, *repos*, which argue the Language very barren, or else the Poet extreamly negligent, and a Lover of Repose. He tells us, That the *Night inspires Repose*. But certainly Motion is a more likely Thing to be inspired, than Rest, as more properly the Effect of Breath.

But without examining this further, let us try if *Le Moine* (whom our Critick prefers before all others of the *French epick Poets*) be more fortunate.

*Cependant le soleil se couche dans son lit,
Que luymesme de pourpre & de laque embellit :
Et la nuit qui survient aussi triste que sombre,
De toute les couleurs ne fuit que une grand' ombre ;
Aveque le sommeil le silence la suit,
L' un amy du repos, l' autre ennemy du bruit :
Et quoique sous leur pas la tempeste se taise,
Quoique le vent s'endorme & que l' onde s'appaise.*

[St. Louys.]

Here again are Words in Abundance. He cannot tell us that 'tis Midnight, till he first have informed us that *the Sun is gone to Bed*, to

a fine Bed of *his own Trimming*; and this is Matter enough for the first two Verses. Then we are told, that the *Night of all Colours makes but one great Shade*; and this suffices for the second Couplet. *Aussi triste que sombre*, is an Expression the French are so delighted with, they can scarce name any Thing of Night without it. The third Couplet is much-what as in a Bill of Fare:

*Item — Beef and Mustard,
That Friend to th' Stomach, this a Foe to th' Nose.*

The second Line in both being alike impertinent.

Any further *Reflections*, or more Examples, would be superfluous. What has been noted, rather concerns the Niceties of *Poetry*, than any the little Trifles of *Grammar*. We have seen what the noblest Wits, both Ancient and Modern, have done in other Languages, and observ'd, that in their very Master-pieces they sometimes trip, or are however liable to Cavils. It now remains, that our *English* be expos'd to the like impartial Censure.

*All things are hush'd, as Nature's self lay dead,
The Mountains seem to nod their drowsy Head,
The little Birds in Dreams their Songs repeat,
And sleeping Flowers beneath the Night-dew sweat,
Even Lust and Envy sleep.*

[In the Conquest of Mexico.]

In this Description, four Lines yield greater variety of Matter, and more choice Thoughts than twice the Number of any other Language. Here is something more *fortunate* than the boldest Fancy has yet reached, and something

thing more just, than the severest Reason has observ'd. Here are the Flights of *Statius* and *Marino* temper'd with a more discerning Judgment, and the Judgment of *Virgil* and *Tasso* animated with a more sprightly Wit. Nothing has been said so expressive, and so home in any other Language as the first Verse in this Description. The second is *Statius* improv'd.

Et simulant fessos curvata cacumina somnos,

saith *Statius*, where *Simulant* is a bold Word, in comparison of our English Word *Seem*, being of an active Signification; and *Cacumina* may as well be taken for the tops of Trees, as the tops of Mountains, which doubtful Meaning does not so well content the Reader, as the Certainty.

In the third Verse, 'tis not said that the Birds sleep, but what is more new, and more poetical, their Sleep is imply'd, by their Dreams. Somewhat like to the Fourth we have in *Marino*,

— *E languidetti i fiori*

Giaceano a l'herba genitrice in seno.

[Adonis, Canto 20.]

Which is a pretty Image, but has not so near a Resemblance with Truth, nor can so generally be apply'd to all Flowers. Our Author here dares not say directly that the Flowers sleep, which might sound a little harsh, but flurs it over in the Participle, as taken for granted, and affirms only, that they sweat, which the *Night-dew* makes very easie.

In the last half-verse we may see how far our Author has out-done *Apollonius*. 'Twas no such

such strange Thing in the sorrowful Woman, when she had spent her Tears for Sleep to close her Eyes: But here we have the most raging and watchful Passions *Lust* and *Envy*: And these too instead of the lustful and the envious, for the greater Force and Emphasis, in the *Abstract*.

Some may object, That the *third* Verse does contradict the *first*. How can *all Things be hush'd*, if *Birds in Dreams repeat their Songs*? Is not this like the Indiscretion of *Marino*, who says, *That the Winds, and all Things are hush'd; and the Sels fast asleep, that they snore*? [Canto 20.]

It may be answered, That in this Place 'tis not the Poet that speaks, but another Person; and that the Poet here truly represents the Nature of Man, whose first Thoughts break out in bold and more general Terms, which by the second Thoughts are more Correct and Limited. As if one should say, *all Things are silent, or asleep*; however, if there is any Noise, 'tis still but the Effect of Sleep, as the Dreams of Birds, &c. This Comparison might be much further improved to our Advantage, and more Observations made, which are left to the Reader's Ingenuity.

Which is a pretty Image, but has not to be neglected. The Poet here represents the Nature of Man, whose first Thoughts break out in bold and more general Terms, which by the second Thoughts are more Correct and Limited. As if one should say, *all Things are silent, or asleep*; however, if there is any Noise, 'tis still but the Effect of Sleep, as the Dreams of Birds, &c. This Comparison might be much further improved to our Advantage, and more Observations made, which are left to the Reader's Ingenuity.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Since it is not so much to instruct, as to exercise the Wits, that I make these Reflections publick; I am not so vain to think them necessary, nor yet humble enough to believe them altogether unprofitable. This Treatise is no new Model of Poësie; for that of Aristotle only is to be adhered to, as the exactest Rule for governing the Wit. In effect, this Treatise of Poësie, to speak properly, is nothing else, but Nature put in Method, and good Sense reduc'd to Principles. There is no arriving at Perfection but by these Rules, and they certainly go astray that take a different Course. What Faults have not most of the Italian, Spanish; and other Poets fallen into, through their Ignorance of these Principles. And if a Poem made by these Rules fails of Success, the Fault lies not in the Art, but in the Artist; all who have Writ of this Art, have followed no other Idea but that of Aristotle.

Horace was the first who propos'd this great Model to the Romans. And by this all the great Men in the Court of Augustus form'd their Wits, who apply'd themselves to make Verse. Petronius (whom no Man of Modesty dares Name, unless on the Account of those Directions he gave for Writing) amongst the Ordures of his Satyr, gives certain Precepts for Poetry that are admirable. He is disgusted with the Stile of Seneca and Lucan, which to him seem'd affected, and contrary

to the Principles of Aristotle. 'Tis at them he levels with those Glances, that slip from him against the Poetasters, and false Declamators. Nothing more judicious, was writ in those Days, yet himself had not that easie and natural Way, which he requires so much in others. He gives the best Rules in the World against Affectation, which he never observes himself. He affects Simplicity of Stile, whereas his Stile is not always Natural. To say the Truth, what is good on this Subject, is all taken from Aristotle, who is the only Source whence good Sense is to be drawn, when one goes about to Write.

We have had no Books of Poesie till this last Age; when that of Aristotle, with his other Works, were brought from Constantinople to Italy; where immediately appear'd a great Number of Commentators, who writ upon this Book of Poesie: The chief whereof were Victorius, Robortellus, Madius, who literally enough interpreted the Text of this Philosopher, without diving much into his Meaning. These were follow'd by Castelvetro, Piccolomini, Beni, Riccobon, Majoragius, Minturnus, Vida, Patricius, Andre Gili, Vossius, and many others. But Vossius has Commented on him meerly as a Scholiast, Gili as a Rhetorician, Patricius as an Historian, Vida as a Poet, who endeavours more to please than to instruct; Minturnus as an Orator, Majoragius and Riccobon as Logicians, Beni as a Doctor who has a sound Judgment when the Honour of his Country is not concern'd. For he compares Ariosto with Homer, and Tasso with Virgil, in a Treatise made expressly on that Subject. Castelvetro and Piccolomini have acquitted themselves as able Criticks, and much better than the rest; Piccolomini deals with Aristotle more fairly than Castelvetro, who is naturally of a morose Wit; and

out of a cross Humour, makes it always his Business to contradict Aristotle, and for the most part confounds the Text, instead of explaining it. Notwithstanding all this, he is the most subtle of all the Commentators, and the Man from whom most may be learned.

In fine, Lope de Vega was the only Person that undertook, on the good Fortune of his old Reputation, to hazard a new Method of Poesie, which he calls *El Arte Nuevo*, wholly different from this of Aristotle, to justify the Fabrick of his Comedies, which the Wits of his Country incessantly criticiz'd upon; which Treatise succeeded so ill, that it was not judg'd worthy of a Place among the rest, in the Collection of his Works, because he follow'd not Aristotle; which I have precisely done in these Reflections, where I bring only Examples to confirm the Rules he gives us. And I take Occasion to tell what we ought to judge of all those who have writ in Verse for more than these two thousand Years. I dispense with my self for speaking of those who are yet living: for I am not in Humour to mount the Stage, and distribute Laurels; I had rather rely on the Publick for the Opinion we ought to have of their Merit.

For the rest, I chuse rather to write by way of Reflections, to avoid all those Words which are necessary for Connexion, in a continu'd Discourse. And since these Reflections may, peradventure, be offensive to some Persons of a different Genius, I expect from them to hear of my Mistakes, that I may make my Profit thereof.

of a cross, however, makes it clear, in fact,
that the commonest Aristotle, and for his part
the Greeks too, in fact, instead of expounding it, they
only standing still, in the most subtle of all the
Commentaries, and the same from which many
are derived.

In fact, Boetius de Vega was the only person who
understood, in the good sense of an old translation,
the word a new edition of Boetius, which he calls
El Arte Nuevo, wholly different from that of Aristotle,
in that he tells the history of his Comedies,
which the Works of his Country in fact, in fact,
were, which the same is intended for all, that it was
the only history of a place among the rest, in the
collection of his Works, that is, in the collection of his
Works; which I have previously done in these Books
before, where I bring only Examples; and I have
the Rules of the same, and I have the same to the
end of the work, in fact, of all those who have written
before for more than these two thousand years, I have
not only myself for speaking of those who are yet
living; for I am not in the room to mention the same,
and afterwards, I have, I have rather say on the
Publick for the Opinion we ought to have of them.

For the rest, I think rather to write by way of
Reflections, to avoid all those Words which are
necessary for Connection, in a continued Discourse,
and these are the Reflections, or observations, as
I have to some Persons of a different Genius, I
will say to them to know of my Reflections, that I may
make my self better.

Mon-

Monfieur R A P I N's

REFLEXIONS

ON

Aristotle's Treatise

OF

POESIE

IN GENERAL.

I.

THE true Value of *Poetry* is ordinarily so little known, that scarce ever is made a true Judgment of it. 'Tis the Talents of Wits only that are above the common Rank, to esteem of it according to its Merit: And one cannot consider, how *Alexander*, *Scipio*, *Julius Caesar*, *Augustus*, and all the great Men of Antiquity, have been affected therewith, without conceiving a noble Idea of it. In effect, *Poesie*, of all Arts, is the most perfect: For the Perfection of other Arts is limited, but this of *Poesie* has no Bounds; to be

be excellent therein, one must know all Things : But this Value will best appear, by giving a Particular of the Qualities necessary for a Poet.

II.

He must have a Genius extraordinary, great natural Gifts ; a Wit just, fruitful, piercing, solid, universal ; an Understanding *clean* and *distinct* ; an Imagination neat and pleasant ; an Elevation of Soul that depends not on Art nor Study, and which is purely a Gift of Heaven, and must be sustain'd by a lively Sense and Vivacity ; a great Judgment to consider wisely of Things, and a Vivacity to express them with that Grace and Abundance which gives them Beauty. But as Judgment without Wit is cold and heavy, so Wit without Judgment is blind and extravagant. Hence it is that *Lucan* often, in his *Pharsalia*, grows flat for want of Wit. And *Ovid*, in his *Metamorphosis*, sometimes loses himself through his defect of Judgment. *Ariosto* has too much Flame : *Dante* has none at all. *Boccace's* Wit is just, but not copious : The Cavalier *Marino* is luxuriant, but wants that justness ; for in fine, to accomplish a Poet, is required a Temperament of Wit and of Fancy, of Strength and Sweetness, of Penetration and of Delicacy : And above all Things, he must have a sovereign Eloquence, and a profound Capacity. These are the Qualities that must concur together to form the Genius of a Poet, and sustain his Character.

III.

But the first *Injustice* that Poets suffer, is, that commonly what is meerly the Effect of Fancy, is mistaken for Wit. Thus an ignorant Person shall *start* up, and be thought a Poet in the World, for a lucky Hit in a Song or Catch, where is only the empty Flash of an Imagination, heated perhaps by a Debauch, and nothing of that cælestial Fire which only is the Portion of an extraordinary Genius. One must be careful (saith Horace) of prophaning that Name, by bestowing it without Distinction on all those who undertake to versifie. For (saith he) there must be a Greatness of Soul, and something divine in the Spirit. There must be lofty Expressions, and noble Thoughts, and an Air of Majesty to deserve that Name. A Sonnet, Ode, Elegy, Epigram, and those little Kind of Verses that often make so much Noise in the World, are ordinarily no more than the meer Productions of Imagination; a superficial Wit, with a little Conversation of the World, is capable of these Things. True Poetry requires other Qualifications; a Genius for War, or for Business, comes nothing near it; a little Flegm, with a competency of Experience, may fit a Man for an important Negotiation; and an Opportunity well manag'd, join'd with a little Hazard, may make the Success of a Battel, and all the good Fortune of a Campaign; but to excite these Emotions of the Soul, and Transports of Admiration that are expected from Poetry, all the Wit that the Soul of Man is capable of, is scarce sufficient. For an Example,

IV.

Homer, who had a Genius accomplish'd for Poetry, had the vastest, sublimest, profoundest, and most universal Wit that ever was; 'twas by his Poems that all the Worthies of Antiquity were form'd: From hence the Law-makers took the first Platform of the Laws they gave to Mankind; the Founders of Monarchies and Common-wealths, from hence took the Model of their Politics. Hence the Philosophers found the first Principles of Morality, which they have taught the People. Hence Physicians have studied Diseases, and their Cures; Astronomers have learn'd the Knowledge of Heaven, and Geometricians of the Earth: Kings and Princes have learn'd the Art to govern, and Captains to form a Battle, to encamp an Army, to besiege Towns, to fight and to gain Victories. From this great Original, *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Aristotle*, came to be Philosophers, *Sophocles* and *Euripides* took the haughty Air of the Theatre and Ideas of Tragedy. *Zeuxes*, *Apelles*, *Polygnorus*, became such excellent Painters; and *Alexander the Great*, so valiant. In fine, *Homer* has been (if I may so say) the first Founder of all Arts and Sciences, and the Pattern of the Wise-men in all Ages. And as he has been in some manner the Author of *Paganism*, the Religion whereof he establish'd by his Poems; one may say, that never Prophet had so many Followers as he: Yet notwithstanding this so universal Genius, this Wit capable of all Things, apply'd himself only to Poetry, which he made his Business.

V.

'Tis in no wise true, what most believe, That some little Mixture of Madness goes to make up the Character of a Poet: for though his Discourse ought in some manner to resemble that of one inspir'd; yet his Mind must always be serene, that he may discern when to let his *Muse* run mad, and when to govern his Transports. And this Serenity of Spirit which makes the Judgment, is one of the most essential Parts of a Poet's Genius, 'tis with this that he must be possess'd. Aristotle allows that there is something divine in his Character, but nothing of Madness. These the Vulgar always confound, and 'tis their Ignorance join'd with the Extravagance of some particular Poets that made way for this Opinion, to the Disrespect of the Profession, which is not consider'd in the World as it ought to be, by reason of the little Care to distinguish those that are Poets, from those that are not.

VI.

One may be an Orator without the natural Gift of Eloquence, because Art may supply that Defect; but no Man can be a Poet without a Genius: The Want of which, no Art or Industry is capable to repair. This Genius is that celestial Fire intended by the Fable, which enlarges and heightens the Soul, and makes it express Things with a lofty Air. Happy is he, to whom Nature has made this Present, by this he is rais'd above himself; whereas others are always low and creeping, and never speak, but what is mean and common.

He that hath a Genius, appears a Poet on the smallest Subjects, by the Turn he gives them, and the noble manner in which he expresses himself. This Character the *French* give their *Monsieur Racan*: But in Truth, where shall we find all these Qualities I have mention'd? Where is that sparkling Wit, and that solid Judgment, that Flame and that Flegm, that Rapture, and that Moderation which constitute that Genius we enquire after? 'Tis the little Wits always, who think they versifie the best; the greatest Poets are the most modest. 'Twas with trembling that *Virgil*, under the Covert of the Night, went to fix on the Gate of the Emperor's Palace, those two Verses which caused so much Admiration all over *Rome*. This great Man conceal'd himself, when *Augustus* so earnestly made search after the Author of that admirable Distich, and he was the last that understood the Value of his own Work: 'Tis certain that the great Wits never have a very good Opinion of what they compose, by reason of the too great Idea of Perfection they propose to themselves in their Works. Happy Age, when Poets were so modest; when shall we see those Days again? Nothing is more troublesome than a Scribbler conceited of his own Merit; he tires all the World, eternally shewing his Labours; and no sooner is he able to make a Rhime at the end of a Line, but all the World must be made to know his Talent; whereas the great Men are in pain whilst they shew themselves, and industriously labour to be conceal'd.

VII.

It is not easily decided what the Nature, and what precisely is the End of this Art; the Interpreters of *Aristotle* differ in their Opinions. Some will have the End to be Delight, and that 'tis on this Account it labours to move the Passions; all whose Motions are delightful, because nothing is more sweet to the Soul than Agitation; it pleases it self in changing the Objects, to satisfy the Immenity of its Desires. 'Tis true, Delight is the End *Poetry* aims at, but not the principal End, as others pretend. In effect, *Poetry* being an Art, ought to be profitable by the Quality of its own Nature, and by the essential Subordination that all Arts should have to Polity, whose End in general is the publick Good. This is the Judgment of *Aristotle*, and of *Horace*, his chief Interpreter.

VIII.

After all, since the Design of *Poetry* is to Delight, it omits nothing that may contribute thereto; 'tis to this Intent, that it makes use of Numbers and Harmony, which are naturally delightful, and animates its Discourse with more lively Draughts, and more strong Expressions, than are allow'd in Prose; and does affranchise it self, from that Constraint and Reservedness that is ordinary with Orators, and permits a great Liberty to Imagination, and makes frequent Images of what is most agreeable in Nature; and never speaks but with Figures, to give a greater Lustre to the Discourse; and is noble in its Idea's, sublime

in the Expressions, bold in the Words, passionate in the Motions, and takes Pleasure in relating extraordinary Adventures, to give the most common and natural Things a fabulous Gloss, to render them more admirable, and heighten Truth by Fiction. 'Tis finally for this, that it employs whatever Art has that is pleasant, because its End is to delight. *Empedocles*, who used not this Art in his Poems, as *Homer*, nor *Lucretius*, as *Virgil*, are not true Poets. *Homer* is delightful even in the Description of *Laertes Swineherd's* Lodge in his *Odyssey*, and *Virgil* in the Dung and Thistles in his *Georgicks*, as he expresses himself; for, every Thing becomes beautiful and flowry in the Hands of a Poet, who hath a Genius.

I X.

However the principal End of *Poesie*, is to profit; not only by refreshing the Mind, to render it more capable of the ordinary Functions, and by asswaging the Troubles of the Soul with its Harmony, and all the Elegancies of Expression: But furthermore, by purging the Manners with wholesome Instructions, which it professes to administer to human Kind: For Vertue being naturally austere, by the Constraint it imposes on the Heart, in representing the Desires; Morality, which undertakes to regulate the Motions of the Heart by its Precepts, ought to make it self delightful, that it may be listened to, which can by no means be so happily effected as by *Poetry*: 'Tis by this, that Morality, in curing the Maladies of Men, makes use of the same Artifice that Physicians have recourse to in the sickness of Children; they mingle Honey with

with the Medicine, to take off the Bitterness. The principal Design therefore of this Art, is to render Pleasant that which is Wholesome: In which 'tis more wise than other Arts, which endeavour to Profit without any Care to Please. Eloquence it self, by its most passionate Discourse, is not always capable to persuade Men to Vertue with that Success, as Poetry; because Men are more sensible and sooner impress'd upon by what is Pleasant, than by Reason. For this Cause, all Poetry that tends to the Corruption of Manners, is Irregular and Vicious; and Poets are to be look'd upon as a publick Contagion, whose Morals are not pure: And 'tis these dissolute and debauch'd Poets that Plato banish'd his Commonwealth. And true it is, that the petty Wits only are ordinarily subject to say, what is impious or obscene. *Homer* and *Virgil* were never guilty in this kind, they were sweet and virtuous as Philosophers; the Muses of true Poets are as chaste as *Vestals*.

X.

For no other End is Poetry delightful, than that it may be profitable. Pleasure is only the Means by which the Profit is convey'd; and all Poetry, when 'tis perfect, ought of necessity to be a publick Lesson of good Manners, for the Instruction of the World. Heroick Poessie proposes the Example of great Vertues and great Vices, to excite Men to abhor these, and to be in love with the other: It gives us an Esteem for *Achilles* in *Homer*, and Contempt for *Thersites*: It begets in us a Veneration for the Piety of *Aeneas* in *Virgil*, and Horror for the Prophaneness of *Mezentius*. Tragedy rectifies

the Use of Passions, by moderating our Fear, and our Pity, which are Obstacles of Vertue; it lets Men see that Vice never escapes unpunish'd, when it represents *Aegylthus*, in the *Electra* of *Sophocles*, punish'd after the ten Years Enjoyment of his Crime. It teaches us, that the Favours of Fortune, and the Grandours of the World, are not always true Goods, when it shews on the Theatre, a Queen so unhappy as *Hecuba*, deploring, with that pathetic Air, her Misfortunes in *Euripides*. Comedy, which is an Image of common Conversation, corrects the publick Vices, by letting us see how ridiculous they are in Particulars. *Aristophanes* does not mock at the foolish Vanity of *Praxagora* (in his *Parliament of Women*) but to cure the Vanity of the other *Athenian Women*: And it was only to teach the *Roman* Soldiers in what consisted true Valour, that *Plautus* expos'd in publick, the Extravagance of false Bravery in his braggadocio Captain, in that Comedy of the *glorious Soldier*.

XI.

But because Poetry is only profitable so far as it is delightful, 'tis of greatest Importance in this Art to please; the only certain way to please, is by Rules: These therefore are to be establish'd, that a Poet may not be left to confound all Things, imitating those Extravagances which *Horace* so much blames; that is to say, by joyning Things naturally incompatible, mixing Tygers with Lambs, Birds with Serpents, to make one Body of different Species, and thereby authorize Fancies more indigested than the Dreams of sick Men; for unless a Man adhere to Principles, he is obnoxious to all Extravagances and

and Absurdities imaginable: Unless he go by Rule, he slips at every Step towards Wit, and falls into Errors as often as he sets out. Into what Enormities hath *Petrarch* run in his *Africa*; *Ariosto* in his *Orlando Furioso*; Cavalier *Maryno* in his *Adonis*, and all the other *Italians* who were ignorant of *Aristotle's* Rules; and followed no other Guides but their own Genius and capricious Fancy? Truth is, the Wits of *Italy* were so prepossess'd in favour of the *romantick* Poetry of *Pulci*, *Boyardo*, and *Ariosto*, that they regarded no other Rules than what the Heat of their Genius inspir'd. The first *Italian* Poet who let the World see that the Art was not altogether unknown to him, was *Giorgio Trissino*, in his Poem of *Italy*, delivered from the *Goths*, under the Pontificates of *Leo X*, and *Clement VIII*. In this Poem appear'd some Kind of Imitation of *Homer's Ilias*. This Model was followed, with Success, by *Tasso* in his *Hierusalem deliver'd*; though one *Oliviero* had essay'd the same before him, but not so happily; in his Poem of *Germany*, *Victorius*, *Madrus*, *Robertellus*, and after them *Castelvetto*, and *Piccolomini*, were the first that made *Europe* acquainted with *Aristotle's* Rules, which were brought over by the *Grecians* from *Constantinople* into *Italy*; and these were followed by *Beni*, *Minturno*, *Ricobon*, *Vida*, *Gallutio*, and many others.

XII.

Aristotle drew the Platform of these Rules from the Poems of *Homer*, and other Poets of his Time, by the Reflections he had a long time made on their Works. I pretend not by a long Discourse to justify the Necessity, the Justness, and

and the Truth of these Rules; nor to make an History of *Aristotle's Treatise of Poësie*; or examine whether it is compleat, which many others have done; all these Things I suppose only I affirm, That these Rules well considered, one shall find them made only to reduce Nature into Method, to trace it Step by Step, and not suffer the least Mark of it to escape us. 'Tis only by these Rules that the Verisimilitude in Fictions is maintained, which is the Soul of *Poësie*. For unless there be the Unity of Place, of Time, and of the Action in the great Poems, there can be no Verisimilitude. In fine, 'tis by these Rules that all becomes just, proportionate, and natural; for they are founded upon good Sense and sound Reason, rather than on Authority and Example. *Horace's Book of Poësie*, which is but an Interpretation of that of *Aristotle*, discovers sufficiently the Necessity of being subject to Rules, by the ridiculous Absurdities one is apt to fall into, who follows only his Fancy; for though *Poësie* be the Effect of Fancy, yet if this Fancy be not regulated, 'tis a mere Caprice, not capable of producing any Thing reasonable.

XIII.

But if the Genius must indispensably be subjected to the Servitude of Rules, 'twill not easily be decided, whether *Art* or *Nature* contributes more to *Poetry*? 'tis one of those Questions unresolv'd, which might be proper for a Declamation, and the Decision is of small importance; it suffices that we know both the one and the other are of that Moment, that none can attain to any sovereign Perfection in *Poetry*, if he be defective in either: So that both

both (saith *Horace*) must mutually assist each other, and conspire to make a Poem accomplished. But though Nature be of little Value without the help of Art, yet we may approve of *Quintilian's* Opinion, who believ'd that all Art did less contribute to that Perfection than Nature. And by the Comparison that *Longinus* makes betwixt *Apollonius* and *Homer*, *Erarosthenes* and *Archilochus*, *Bacchilides* and *Pindar*, *Ion* and *Sophocles*, the former of all which never transgressed against the Rules of Art, whereas these other did; it appears that the Advantage of Wit is always prefer'd before that of Art.

XIV.

'Tis not enough to have a *Genius*; one must know that he has it, and be sure by the Experience he ought to have of it; and he must know well of what it is most capable, and of what it is not, lest he force it contrary to the Precept of *Horace*, which yet cannot be known without a long time making Reflections on himself: And though Nature is always ready to discover it self, yet we are not to rely on that, but study it with great Attention, to learn its Strength. There are universal *Genius's* capable of all Things by the immensity of their Wit, as *Horace* and *Virgil*; and there are others that are limited. *Demetrius Phalerens* says, That *Archilochus* had not that Greatness of Soul proper for an heroic Poem, which *Homer* was endow'd withal. *Anacreon*, whose Delicacy of Wit was admirable, had not that Loftiness. *Propertius* affirms of himself, That he was not fit to sing the Wars of *Augustus*, nor describe the Genealogy of *Cæsar*. *Horace* peradventure, by the Strength

Strength of his *Genius*, might have been capable of a great *Poem*, if his Inclination and Nature had not determined him to *lyrick Verse*. *Fracastorius*, who with so good Success writ his *Syphilis*, the most excellent *Poem* in *Latin Verse* that these latter Ages has produc'd in *Italy*, and which is writ in Imitation of *Virgil's Georgicks*, was not so happy in his *epick Poem* of *Joseph Viceroy of Egypt*, a Fragment whereof is extant; for this *Poem* is of a poor *Genius*, and low Character. *Ronsard*, who had a Talent for *lyrick Verse* in *Scaliger's* Opinion, and who got Reputation by his *Odes*, fell short extreamly in his *Franciad*, which is dry and barren throughout, and has nothing of an *heroick Air* in it.

VIX

XV. But 'tis not so much to discover its Strength, that we must know our *Genius*, as that we may be diligent to form it by the Help of Art, and not go astray in the Way we take to bring it to Perfection. 'Twas thus that *Horace*, whose *Genius* was capable of all Things, chiefly applied himself to *Satyr*, by the Inclination of his natural *Gaiety*; which made him rally so pleasantly on all Occasions. He had found in his Nature the Seeds of this Character, which he afterwards cultivated with so much Success. And what *Loftiness* he found in his Nature, he confined to *lyrick Poesie*, for which he had an Inclination. For though he had a *Genius* for greater Things, yet by a certain Love of Ease, which was natural to him, he only applied himself to the little, for that he was not of a Humour to strain, or give himself trouble. *Quid* finding in himself a Capacity of expressing

sing

sing Things naturally, left heroick Verse to write Elegies, in which he was more happy. *Virgil*, who perceiv'd himself more strong, and had a greater Elevation of Soul, took Trumpet in Hand, and rais'd himself by his Eclogues, and Georgicks, as by so many Steps to the most sublime Character of heroick Verse. 'Tis therefore, by reflecting a long time on a Man's self, and by continual Study of his Nature, join'd with the Care and Exercise of composing, that he does accomplish his *Genius*, and arrives to Perfection.

Nothing can more contribute to this Perfection, than a *Judgment* proportion'd to the *Wit*; for, the greater that the *Wit* is, and the more Strength and Vigour that the *Imagination* has to form these Idea's that enrich *Poësie*, the more Wisdom and Discretion is requisite to moderate that Heat, and govern its natural *Fury*. For Reason ought to be much stronger than the *Fancy*, to discern how far the *Transports* may be carried. 'Tis a great Talent to forbear speaking all one Thinks, and to leave something for others to employ their Thoughts. 'Tis not ordinarily known how far Matters should be carried; a Man of an accomplish'd *Genius* stops regularly where he ought to stop, and retrenches boldly what ought to be omitted. 'Tis a great Fault not to leave a Thing when 'tis well, for which *Apelles* so much blam'd *Protagoras*. This Moderation is the Character of a great *Wit*, the *Vulgar* understand it not; and (whatever is alledg'd to the contrary) never any, save *Homer* and *Virgil*, had the Discretion to leave a Thing when 'twas well.

XVII.

This natural Discernment, which is necessary for a Poet to accomplish him, ought itself to be improv'd, and to attain to Perfection by the Ministry of Art, without which, nothing exact or regular can be produc'd. A Poet that designs to write nothing but what is just and accurate, above all Things ought to apply himself with great Attention to the Precepts of *Aristotle*, as the best Master that ever writ of this Art; but because his Method is nothing exact, though his Matter be solid, I rather attend his Rules, than the Order in which he has left them. *Horace*, who was the first Interpreter of *Aristotle*, in his Book on this Subject, has observ'd as little Method, because peradventure it was writ in an Epistle, whose Character ought to be free, and without constraint. This is what may be said in General, of subjecting the Wit to Rules of Art, which the *Italian* and *Spanish* Poets scarce ever were acquainted withal: Hereafter follows what may be observ'd in Particular of this Art.

XVIII.

The Art of Poetry in general, comprehends the Matters of which a Poet treats, and the Manner in which he handles them; the Invention, the Contrivance, the Design, the Proportion, and Symmetry of Parts, the general Disposition of Matters, and whatever regards the Invention, belonging to the Matters of which this Art ought to treat. The Fable, the Characters, the Sentiments, the Words, the Figures, the Numbers, the Harmony, the Versification, regard

the Manner in which the Matters are to be handled: So that the Art is (as it were) the Instrument of the Genius, because it contains essentially all the different Parts which are employ'd in the Management. So that those who are furnish'd with a naked Wit only, and, who, to be great Poets, rely principally on their Fancy, as Cavalier Marino among the Italians, Theophile among the French; and those likewise who place the Essence of Poetry in big and pompous Words, as Statius among the Latins, and Du Bartas among the French, are much mistaken in their Account, when they aspire to the Glory of Poetry by such feeble Means.

XIX.

Among the Particulars of this Art, the Subject and Design ought to have the first Place, because it is, as it were, the first Production of the Wit; and the Design in a Poem is, what they call the *Ordonnance* in a Picture. The great Painters only are capable of a great Design in their Draughts, such as a Raphael, a Julius Romanus, a Poussin; and only great Poets are capable of a great Subject in their Poetry. An indifferent Wit may form a vast Design in his Imagination, but it must be an extraordinary Genius that can work this Design, and fashion it according to Justness and Proportion. For 'tis necessary that the same Spirit reign throughout, that all contribute to the same End, and that all the Parts bear a secret Relation to each other, all depend on this Relation and Alliance; and this general Design is nothing else but the *Form* which a Poet gives to his Work. This also is the most difficult

difficult Part, being the Effect of an accomplish'd Judgment; and because Judgment is not the ordinary Talent of the *French*, 'tis generally in the Contrivance of their Design that their *Poets* are defective; and nothing is more rare among them, than a Design that is great, just, and well-conceiv'd. They pretend to be more happy in the Talents of Wit and Fancy, as likewise the *Italians*. The most perfect Design of all modern *Poems*, is that of *Tasso*; nothing more compleat has appear'd in *Italy*, though great Faults are in the Conduct of it. And the most judicious, the most admirable, the most perfect Design of all Antiquity, is that of *Virgil* in his *Aeneids*; all there is great and noble, all proportionable to the Subject, which is the Establishment of the Empire of *Rome*, to the Hero, who is *Aeneas*, to the Glory of *Augustus* and the *Romans*, for whom it was compos'd. Nothing is weak or defective in the Execution, all there is Happy, all is Just, all is Perfect. But the sovereign Perfection of a Design, in the Opinion of *Horace*, is to be simple, and that all turn on the same Centre. Which is so true, that even in little Things, that is to say, in an *Eclogue*, *Elogy*, *Song*, or *Epigram*, and in the meanest Compositions, there ought to be a just Call, and that all of it turn on the same Point. *Ovid* did much Violence to himself to unite his *Metamorphoses*, and close them in one Design, in which he was not altogether so happy, as afterwards in his *Elegies*, where well nigh always one may find a certain Turn, which binds the Design, and makes thereof a Work that is just by the dependance and relation of its Parts. In this the ancient Poets were always more exact than the Moderns.

for most of the Modern express their Thoughts *biggle piggle*, without any Order or Connexion. If there be Design, 'tis never with that scrupulous Unity, which is the principal Vertue that should be predominant, to make it just and compleat. I know there are a Kind of Works, which, by the Quality of their Character, ought to be writ with a free Air, without other Design than that of writing Things naturally, and without Constraint; such are the Hymns of *Orpheus*, *Homer*, *Callimachus*; and such are certain Odes of *Pindar*, *Anacreon*, and *Horace*, that have no other Rule but Enthusiasm; and such likewise are the most Part of the Elegies of *Tibullus* and *Propertius*. But it must be granted, that these are not the best and most beautiful; and who reflects on the Elegies of *Ovid*, shall always there perceive a secret Turn which makes the Design, and this is ordinarily the principal Beauty in these little Works of Verse, as may be seen in most Epigrams of the Anthology; in those of *Catullus*, in the *correct* Odes of *Horace*, and in the Phalensacks of *Bonifons*, who within this last Age, has writ in *Latin* Verse with all the Softness and Delicacy possible. Thus every Sort of *Poesie* ought to have its proportionable Design; a great Design, in great Poems; and in little, a little Design: But of this the ordinary Wits know nothing; their Works, which generally are meer Productions of Imagination, have scarce ever any Design, unless it be by chance. It must be the Work of an accomplish'd Genius, to close his Thoughts in a Design, whence results an Agreement and Proportion of Parts, that makes the Harmony perfect.

XX.

The *Design* of a Poem must consist of two Parts; of Truth, and of Fiction: Truth is the Foundation, Fiction makes the Accomplishment. And *Aristotle* calls the Mixture of these two, *The Constitution of Things*: or, *The Fable*, which is no other than the Subject of a Poem, as the Design or Fable of the *Andria* in *Terence*, are the Loves of *Pamphilus* and *Glycerium*. The Fable of *Hippolitus* in *Euripides*, is the Passion of *Phadra* for her Son-in-Law: This Passion causes the Misfortunes of *Hippolitus*, and the Disorders of *Theseus's* House. The Fable of *Hommer's Iliad* is the Anger of *Achilles*, who by his Presence, or his Absence from the *Grecian* Army, determines the good or ill Success of all his Party; the Anger of this Prince, which proceeds of the Discontent he receiv'd from *Agamemnon*, is the Truth of the History, which is adorn'd with all the *Episodes* and Variety of Adventures that enrich this Poem: and the Poet fills not his Poem with that Variety of extraordinary Events, but to give Delight; which he could never perform, if he had nothing to say but Truth; and he would never be regarded, if all were fabulous; therefore *History* and *Fiction* must necessarily enter the Composition of the Subject.

XXI.

Aristotle divides the Fable, which serves for Argument to a Poem, into Simple and Compound. The Simple is that which hath no Change of Fortune, as is the *Prometheus* of *Æschylus*, and the *Hercules* of *Seneca*. The
Com-

Compound Fable is that which hath a Turn from bad Fortune to good, or from good to bad, as the *Oedipus* of *Sophocles*. And the Contrivance of each Fable must have Two Parts, the *Intrigue*, and the *Discovery*. The *Intrigue* embroils Matters, casting Troubles and Confusion among the Affairs. The *Discovery* remits all into a Calm again. Whatever goes before the Change of Fortune, is called the *Intrigue*; all that makes the Change, or follows it, is the *Discovery*. The *Intrigue* in the *Andromache* of *Euripides*, is, That this Princess, after she had lost *Hector* her Husband, and seen her Father *Priam* murder'd, the chief City of his Kingdom burnt, became a Slave to *Neoptolemus*; *Hermione*, the Wife of this Prince, prick'd with Jealousy against *Andromache*, was minded to kill her; *Menelaus*, Father of *Hermione*, causes her with her Son, *Astyanax*, to be drag'd to Execution: This is the *Intrigue*. Now she is rescu'd from Death by *Tethys* and *Peleus*, who prefer the Son to be King of the *Molossians*, and the Mother to be Queen by a Marriage with *Helenus*; this is the *Discovery*. And every Fable must have these two Parts, to be the Subject of a just Poem. Thus *Aeneas* chas'd from his Country, spoil'd of all that he possess'd, beaten by Tempests, wandering from Coast to Coast, destitute of all Succours, persecuted by *Juno*, and the other Deities of her *Cabal*: After all these Disgraces, became the Founder of the greatest Monarchy in the World. This is the Fable of the *Aeneid* with its *Intrigue*, and its *Discovery*. And it is to be observ'd, that only by this Change of Fortune the Fable pleases, and has its Effect, in which the simple Fable is defective

Give in *Aristotle's* Opinion, because it wants Variety.

XXII.

Fable is so essential to *Poetry*, that there is no *Poetry* without it ; it is the Form and the Distinction ; for the *Fable* to a *Poem*, is what the *Figure* is to *Marble* in a *Statue* ; but the *Fable*, besides the two Parts already mention'd, that compose it, must yet have two Qualities to be perfect ; it must be *admirable*, and it must be *probable*. By the first of these *Qualities* it becomes worthy of *Admiration* ; and by the second it becomes worthy of *Belief*. However *admirable* the *Fable* be, it can have no Effect, unless it be *probable*. The Truth is, it strikes the *Soul*, because it is extraordinary, but it never enters, nor can make any Impression, by reason it appears *incredible*. Probability alone is too faint and dull for *Poetry*, and what is only *admirable* is too *dazling*. 'Tis true, whatever appears incredible, is strongly relish'd by the Curiosity of the People ; for the People, saith *Synesius*, despise whatever seems common and ordinary ; they love nothing but what is *prodigious*, but the *wise* cannot endure what is *incredible* ; the Publick being compos'd of the one and the other, is delighted with what is *admirable*, so be, it is *credible* ; therefore it most imports to know so to mingle these in such a just Temperament as may please the Fancy, without shocking the Reason ; but to learn this Secret, it must be known what it is to be *admirable*, and what it is to be *probable*.

XXIII.

The *Admirable* is all that which is against the ordinary Course of Nature. The *Probable* is whatever suits with common Opinion. The changing of *Niobe* into a Stone, is an Event that holds of the *admirable*; yet this becomes *probable*, when a *Deity*, to which Power this Change was possible, is engaged. *Aneas*, in the Twelfth Book of the *Aeneids*, lifts, by himself, a Stone, that ten Men could scarce remove; this Prodigy is made *probable* by the Assistance of the *Gods* that took his Part against *Turnus*. But most part of those that make Verse, by too great a Passion they have to create *Admiration*, take not sufficient Care to Temper it with *Probability*. Against this Rock most ordinarily fall the *Poets*, who are too easily carried to say *incredible Things*, that they may be *admirable*. Thus *Homer*, in the Fifteenth Book of his *Iliads*, makes *Stentor's* Voice more loud than that of fifty Men. And *Virgil* makes a Bough of Gold to grow on a Tree, in the Sixth of his *Aeneids*. And *Boreas* demands of *Aeolus*, in the *Argonauticks* of *Valerius Flaccus*, the Permission to destroy the Ship of the *Argonauts*, where his two Sons, *Zethus* and *Calais* were embark'd. Almost all the ancient *Poets*, however judicious otherwise, have been guilty of this Fault; not to speak of the Modern, and especially *Ariosto*, for that *Hippogrife*, or winged Horse of *Roger*, those Giants, those Monsters, that wonderful Ring of *Angelica*, which renders her invisible; the Combats of *Marfisa*, *Bradamante*, and *Olympia*, and all the Bravery of that Sex, which he makes valiant in War, contrary to their natural Timidity; those Vi-

sions, Enchantments, and prodigious Adventures, are like the *vain Imaginations of a sick Brain*, and are pitied by all Men of *Sense*, because they have no Colour of Likelihood. The same Judgment must be pronounc'd of the other *Italian* and *Spanish Poets*, who suffer their Wits to ramble in the *romantick Way*; 'tis too great Honour to call them Poets, they are for the most Part but *Rhimesters*.

XXIV.

Besides, that *Probability* serves to give Credit to whatever *Poesie* has the most fabulous; it serves also to give, to whatever the *Poet* saith, a greater *Lustre* and *Air of Perfection*, than *Truth* it self can do, tho' *Probability* is but the Copy. For *Truth* represents Things only as they are, but *Probability* renders them as they ought to be. *Truth* is well nigh always defective, by the Mixture of particular Conditions that compose it. Nothing is brought into the World that is not remote from the *Perfection* of its *Idea* from the very *Birth*. *Originals* and *Models* are to be search'd for in *Probability*, and in the *universal Principles* of Things, where nothing that is *Material* and *Singular* enters to corrupt them; for this Reason the Portraits of *History* are less perfect than the Portraits of *Poesie*; and *Sophocles*, who in his *Tragedies* represents *Men* as they ought to be, is, in the Opinion of *Aristotle*, to be prefer'd before *Euripides*, who represents *Men* as really they are; and *Horace* makes less account of the *Lessons* of *Crantor* and *Chrysippus*, for the *Manners*, than of those of *Homer*.

XXV.

After the *Design* or *Fable*, Aristotle places the *Manners* for the Second Part: he calls the *Manners* the *Cause* of the *Action*; for it is from these that a Man begins to act. *Achilles* retires from the *Grecian Army* in *Homer*, because he is discontented. *Aeneas* in *Virgil* carries his Gods into *Italy*, because he is pious. *Medea* kills her Children in *Seneca*, because she is revengeful; so the *Manners* are, as it were, the first Spring of all human *Actions*. The Painter draws *Faces* by their *Features*; but the Poet represents the *Minds* of Men by their *Manners*; and the most general Rule for Painting the *Manners*, is to exhibit every Person in his proper *Character*: A *Slave*, with base Thoughts, and servile Inclinations: A *Prince*, with a liberal Heart, and Air of Majesty: A *Soldier*, fierce, insolent, surly, inconstant: An *Old Man*, covetous, wary, jealous. 'Tis in describing the *Manners* that *Terence* triumphed over all the Poets of his Time, in *Varro's* Opinion, for his Persons are never found out of their *Characters*. He observes their *Manners* in all the Niceties and Rigours of *Decorum*, which *Homer* himself has not always done, as some pretend. *Longinus* cannot endure the *Wounds*, the *Adulteries*, the *Hatred*, and all the other Weaknesses to which he makes the Gods obnoxious, contrary to their *Character*. *Philostratus* finds much to object against his Portraits; but *Justin Martyr* excuses him, alledging, That he took these Notions from *Orpheus*, and that he had follow'd the Opinion that publickly prevail'd in those Days. However it be, it may be granted, that *Homer* has not treated the Gods with all

the Respect due to their Condition. *Aristotle* condemns *Euripides* for introducing *Menalippa* to speak too much like a *Philosopher* of the *Sett* of *Anaxagoras*, whose *Opinions* were then new in his Time. *Theon* the *Sophist* cannot endure the unseasonable Discourses of *Hecuba* on her Misfortunes, in the same Author. *Sophocles* makes *Oedipus* too weak and low-spirited in his Exile, after he had bestow'd on him that Character of Constancy and Resolution before his Disgrace. *Seneca*, for his Part, knows nothing of the *Manners*. He is a fine Speaker, who is eternally uttering pretty Sayings, but is in no wise natural in what he speaks, and whatever Persons he makes to speak, they always have the Mien of Actors. The *Angelica* of *Ariosto* is too immodest. The *Armida* of *Tasso* is too free and impudent; these two Poets rob Women of their Character, which is Modesty. *Rinaldo* is soft and effeminate in the one, *Orlando* is too tender and passionate in the other. These Weaknesses in no wise agree with *Heroes*; they are degraded from the Nobleness of their Condition, to make them guilty of Folly. The sovereign Rule for treating of *Manners*, is to Copy them after Nature; and above all, to study well the Heart of Man, to know how to distinguish all its Motions. 'Tis this which none are acquainted with: The Heart of Man is an *Abyss*, where none can sound the Bottom: It is a *Mystery*, which the most quick-sighted cannot pierce into, and in which the most cunning are mistaken; at the worst the Poet is oblig'd to speak of *Manners* according to the common Opinion. *Ajax* must be represented grim, as *Sophocles*; *Polyxena* and *Iphigenia*, generous, as *Euripides* has represented them. Finally, the *Man-*

ners must be proportionable to the *Age*, to the *Sex*, to the *Quality*, to the *Employment*, and to the *Fortune* of the Persons: And it is particularly in the second Book of *Aristotle's Rhetorick*, and in *Horace's Book of Poetry*, that this Secret may be learn'd; whatever agrees not with his Principles, is false: Nothing tolerable can be perform'd in Poetry without this Knowledge, and with it all becomes admirable. And *Horace* in that place of his Book of *Poetry*, where he makes distinction of Ages to draw their Portraits, affirms, that 'tis only by the representation of *Manners* that any can have success on the Stage; for there all is *frivolous*, if the *Manners* be not observ'd.

XXVI.

The third Part of the Art consists in the Thoughts or Sentiments, which are properly the Expressions of the Manners, as Words are the Expressions of the Thoughts. Their Office, saith *Aristotle*, is to approve or dislike, to stir or to calm the Passions, to magnifie, or diminish Things. Thus *Polyxena* in the *Hecuba* of *Euripides*, cannot approve the Thoughts of her Mother, which directed her to throw her self at the Feet of *Ulysses* to move him to Pity, who demanded her in the Name of the *Grecian Army* to be sacrific'd; for Virtue inspir'd this generous Princess with other Sentiments. 'Tis thus that *Drances* in *Virgil* amplifies (at the Council of King *Latinus*) the Danger, the Injustice, the ill Consequences of the War they wag'd with *Aeneas*, being fearful and cowardly: And that *Turnus* confutes so strongly the Sentiments of this Speaker, being himself valiant, and a Despiser of Dangers. Thoughts must

must not only be conformable to the *Persons* to whom they are given, but likewise to the Subject treated of; that is to say, on great Subjects are required great Thoughts, as those of *Evadne* in the *Suppliants* of *Euripides*; there this Queen, after the Death of her Husband *Capaneus*, may be seen to express all the Extremity of her Grief, by Force of a Sorrow, the most generous that ever was; her Affliction oppresses her, without extorting from her one Word that betrays any thing of Weakness. The *Greek* Poets are full of these great Thoughts: And it is much by this Greatness of their Sentiments, that they are particularly signaliz'd in their Works. *Demetrius* and *Longinus* perpetually propose them for Models to those who study the *sublime Style*; and it is in these great *Originals* that our modern Poets ought to consult *Nature*, to learn how to raise their Wits, and be lofty: We may flatter our selves with our Wit, and the *Genius* of our (the *French*) Nation; but our *Soul* is not enough exalted to frame great *Idea's*, we are busied with petty *Subjects*, and by that Means it is that we prove so cold in the Great; and that in our Works scarce appears any Shadow of that sublime *Poesie*, of which the ancient Poets have left such excellent *Models*, and above all, *Homer* and *Virgil*; for great Poetry must be animated and sustain'd by great Thoughts, and great Sentiments; but these we ordinarily want either because our Wit is too much limited or because we take not Care to exercise it on important Matters. Thus we are low on high Subjects. For Example, how Feeble are we when we speak of the Conquests of a King. Our Poets make their Expressions swell, to supply the Want of noble Sentiments: But it

not only the *Greatness* of the *Subjects*, and the *Thoughts* that give this *Air of Majesty* to *Poetry*; there is likewise required lofty *Words* and noble *Expressions*.

XXVII.

The last Part is the *Expression*, and whatever regards the *Language*; it must have five *Qualities*, to have all the *Perfection* *Poetry* demands: It must be, *apt*, *clear*, *natural*, *splendid*, and *numerous*. The *Language* must in the first place be *apt*, and have nothing *impure* or *barbarous*: For though one may speak what is *great*, *noble*, and *admirable*, all is *despicable* and *odious*, if the *Purity* be wanting: The greatest *Thoughts* in the *World* have not any *Grace*, if the *Construction* be defective. This *Purity* of *Writing* is of late, so strongly established among the *French*, that he must be very *hardy*, that will make *Verse* in an *Age* so delicate, unless he understand the *Tongue* perfectly. Secondly, the *Language* must be *clear*, that it may be *intelligible*; for one of the greatest *Faults* in *Discourse* is *obscurity*. In this *Camoens*, whom the *Portuguese* call their *Virgil*, is extremely blameable; for his *Verse* are so *obscure*, that they may pass for *Mysteries*: And the *Thoughts* of *Dante* are so *profound*, that much *Art* is required to dive into them. *Poetry* demands a more *clear Air*, and what is less *incomprehensible*. The third *Quality* is, that it be *natural*, without *Affectation*, according to *Rules of Decorum* and good *sense*. *Studied Phrases*, a too *florid Style*, *fine Words*, *Terms strain'd* and *remote*, and all *extraordinary Expressions* are *insupportable* to the *true Poësie*; only *Simplicity* pleases, provided it be *sustain'd* with *Greatness* and *Majesty*: But this

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Simplicity is not known, except by great Souls, the little Wits understand nothing of it; 'tis the Master-piece of Poesie, and the Character of *Homer* and *Virgil*. The Ignorant hunt after Wit, and fine Thoughts, because they are ignorant. The Language must be lofty and splendid, which is the fourth Quality; for the common and ordinary Terms are not proper for a Poet: He must use Words that partake nothing of the Base and Vulgar; they must be noble and magnificent; the Expressions strong, the Colours lively, the Draughts bold: His Discourse must be such as may equal the Greatness of the Idea's of a Workman, who is the Creator of his Work. The fifth Quality, is that it be *numerous*, to uphold that Greatness and Air of Majesty which reigns throughout in Poesie, and to express all the Force and Dignity of the great Things it speaks: Terms that go off roundly from the Mouth, and that fill the Ears, are sufficient to render all admirable, as Poesie requires. But this is not enough that the Expressions be stately and great, there must likewise be *Heat* and *Vehemence*: And above all, there must shine throughout the Discourse a certain Grace and Delicacy, which makes the principal Ornament, and most universal Beauty.

XXXVIII.

It may be affirm'd, that never Person in any Language possessed all these Qualities in such eminent Degree, as *Homer*; he is the first Model a Poet must propose to himself to write as he ought; for never Person writ more purely, nor more naturally than he: 'Tis he alone that ever found the Secret of joy-
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ning to the purity of Style, all the sublimity and greatness that heroick Poësie is capable of: For this Reason, *Longinus* always proposes him as the most just and exact Rule for the sublime Style. It was formerly on this Original, that *Euphranor* form'd his Idea for drawing the Image of *Jupiter*; for, that he might be more successful therein, he travell'd to *Athens* to consult a Professor that read *Homer* to his Scholars. Upon the Description the Poet gives in the first Book of his *Iliads*, of a *Jupiter* with black Eye-brows, a Brow cover'd with Clouds, and a Head environ'd with all that Majesty has most terrible, this Painter made a Portraët that after was the Wonder of his Age, as *Appion* the Grammarian has reported. The same happened to *Phidias* in that admirable Statue of *Jupiter* he made, after the Model he found in the same Place in *Homer*, as *Eustathius* affirms. And one of the most famous Painters of this Age, made *Homer* be read to him to heighten his Fancy, when he disposed himself to draw. The same Judgment is to be made of the Expressions of *Virgil*, especially in his *Georgicks*.

XXIX.

The Loftiness of Expression is so important, that for the attaining it, 'tis not enough to propose *Homer* and *Virgil*, it must be search'd in *Pindar*, in *Sophocles*, in *Euripides*; and it must be had in grave and serious Subjects, that, of themselves, are capable to furnish with great Thoughts, as the great Thoughts are capable to furnish with noble Expressions. But the way to heighten Discourse, saith *Aristotle*, is to make good Use of Metaphors, and to understand perfectly their Nature, that they may not be abus'd: Poet. c. 2.
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Lib. 8.
cap. 6.

and he adds in the same place, *That this Discernment is the Mark of an excellent Wit; and because, as saith Quintilian, this Loftiness which is aimed at by the Boldness of a Metaphor, is dangerous, inasmuch that it comes nigh to Rashness; Aristotle must be consulted on this Matter, to employ them with Discretion, as Virgil has done: who treating of Bees, in the fourth Book of his Georgicks, that he might heighten the Meanness of his Subject, speaks not of them but in metaphorical Terms, of a Court, of Legions, of Armies, of Combats, pitch'd Fields, Kings, Captains, Soldiers: And by this admirable Art, forms a noble Image of the lowest Subject; for after all, they are still but Flies. Finally, the Poet must above all Things, know what Eloquence has of Art and Method for the Use of Figures: For it is only by the Figures he gives Force to the Passions, Lustre to the Discourses, Weight to the Reasons, and makes delightful all he speaks. 'Tis only by the most lively Figures of Eloquence that all the Emotions of the Soul become fervent and passionate: Nature must be the only Guide that can be proposed in the Use of these Figures and Metaphors, and must therefore be well understood, that it may be trac'd and follow'd without Mistake; for no Portraits can be drawn that have Resemblance without it, and all the Images that Poetry employs in expressing it self, are false, unless they be natural.*

XXX.

But this sublime Stile is the Rock to the mean Wits: They fly out in too vast and boisterous Terms, from what is natural, when they endeavour to be high and lofty. For this

this haughty and pompous Kind of Speech becomes vain and cold, if not supported with great Thoughts; and the great Words that are indiscreetly affected to heighten the Discourse, for the most part only make a Noise. The Emperor *Nero*, who had the Worm in his Head, and conceited himself a Wit, ran into this Character with that Extravagance, that he became a Subject of Raillery to the *Satyrists* of his Time. *Statius*, who had a better Genius, would imitate this Kind of writing in his Poems, by an Affectation of great Words, and swelling Expressions: But seeing he swells into *Fustian*, he fills the Ears without touching the Heart; and all those universally, who in the Decline of the Empire affected to be lofty, and wanted Wit, by a too great Boldness of Language, became obscure, as *Persius* in his Satyrs; or cold and flat, as *Valerius Flaccus* in his *Argonauticks*; or fell into the *Impropriety*, as *Sidonius Appollinaris*, and the others. For the most essential Virtue of Speech, next to the Clearness and Perspicuity, is, that it be chaste and modest, as *Demetrius Phalerius* observes; There must be (saith he) a Proportion betwixt the Words and the Things: And nothing is more ridiculous, than to handle a frivolous Subject in a sublime Style; for whatsoever is disproportionate, is either altogether false, or at least, is trifling and childish. This by *Socrates* is objected to the *Plut.* Sophist *Gorgias Leontinus*, whom he pleasantly *Georg.* plays upon for affecting to speak petty Things with a great and solemn Mien. Most French Poets fall into this Vice, for want of Genius; their Verses where *Logick* is much neglected, most commonly, are either *Pedantry* or *Non-sense*. Should I cite Examples, there would be no End: *Dubartas* and *Ronsard*, who would
heighten

heighten their Conceits with *great Words* after their Fashion, *compounded* according to the Manner of the *Greek*, and of which the *French Tongue* is not capable, were guilty of *Impropriety*, and made themselves *barbarous*; who succeeded them, committed the same Fault.

Malherb was the first that joyn'd *Purity* to the lofty Style; but being the *Beginner*, he could not carry it to *Perfection*, there is good Store of Prose amongst his Verse. *Theophile*, who follow'd him, by too great Affectation of the easie Stile, degenerated into Trifling and Puerility: The Truth is, the Foundation of his Character was a *luxuriant Fancy*, rather than a *fruitful Wit*. The *Pharsale* of *Brebeuf* corrupted afterward much of the Youth, who were *dazzled* at the Pomp of his Verse. 'Tis true, they have *Splendour*: But after all, whatever seem'd great and sublime in this Poem, when 'tis view'd near hand, will not pass with the Intelligent, but for a false *Lustre* full of Affectation. The small Wits were transported with the Noise this Poem made formerly, which at the Bottom has nothing in it natural.

XXXI.

Of late some have fallen into another Extremity, by a too scrupulous Care of *Purity of Language*: They have begun to take from *Poesie* all its *Nerves*, and all its *Majesty*, by a too *timerous Reservedness*, and *false Modesty*, which some thought to make the Character of the *French Tongue*, by robbing it of all those *wise and judicious Boldnesses* that *Poesie* demands: They would retrench, without Reason, the Use of *Metaphors*, and of all those *Figures* that

that give Life and Lustre to the *Expressions*: And study to confine all the Excellency of this admirable Art within the Bounds of a *pure* and *corrected* Discourse, without exposing it to the Danger of any high and bold Flight. The *Gust* of the Age, which lov'd Purity; the *Women*, who naturally are modest, the *Court*, which then had scarce any Commerce with the great *Men* of Antiquity, through their ordinary *Antipathy* to Learning, and the general *Ignorance* in the Persons of Quality, gave *Reputation* to this Way of writing: But nothing more authorized it, than the Verses of *Voiture* and *Sarazin*, the *Metamorphosis* of the *Eyes* of *Phyllis* into *Stars*, the *Temple* of *Death*, the *Eclogues* of *Lane*, and some other Works of that Character, that came abroad at that Time with a Success which distinguish'd them from the *Vulgar*. In this Way they were *Polite*, and writ good Sense; and it agreed with the Gust of the Age, and was follow'd: And who succeeded therein, would make a new Kind of *Refinement* in *Poetry*; as if the Art consisted only in the Purity and Exactness of Language. This indeed pleased well, and was much to the Advantage of *Women* that had a mind to be tampering and *writing in Verse*; they found it their Concern to give Vogue to this Kind of Writing, of which they were as capable as the most Part of Men; for all the Secret was no more but to make some little easie Verses, in which they were content, if they could close some Kind of *Delicateness* of sweet and passionate Thoughts, which they made the *Essence* of *Poetry*. The ill Fortune is, *Horace* was not of their Mind: *It is not enough* (saith he) *to write with Purity, to make a Poet*: He must have other *Qualities*. But there are

now living, Authors, of a more strong and noble Genius than those I have mention'd, who, at this Day, let us see in their *Works*, that *Purity of Language* may be joyn'd with *Greatness of Thoughts*, and with all the Elevation, whereof *heroick Poesie* can be capable; but there is not in the *French Tongue* any Work, wherein is so much Poetry, as in the Poem of *St. Louis*; yet the Author is not reserved enough; he gives his *Wit* too much Scope, and his *Fancy* always carries him too far.

XXXII.

But examining well, one shall find that *heroick Poetry* is not so much in Use among the *French*, as some would perswade us; either by the Application of them to little and frivolous Subjects, or by a natural Difficulty in them, which clogs and suffers them not to rise in the Matters of which they treat; or by reason they want a *Genius* for that *Character* they ought to bear; or that in Effect, their Models are defective. He is but capable of *very little*, who governs himself, and is directed only by the *modern Poems*; whereas nothing noble and sublime can be made without consulting the *Ancients*. The greatest Flights of *Latin Poetry* are in some certain excellent Places of *Virgil's Georgicks*, and every wherein his *Aeneids*, that are capable of great Figures. The *modern Latin Poets* afford but few; most whereof have only copied *Virgil's Phrases*, without expressing his *Spirit*. *Fracastorius*, *Vida*, Cardinal *Sadolet*, *Sannazarius*, have some *Touches* of that noble Air, but not many: They fall and return again to their own *Genius*, when they have strain'd a little to reach that of *Virgil*: And amidst the
vain

vain Efforts of a servile Imitation, there continually escape from them some Strokes of their own natural Spirit. It may be affirm'd likewise, that the best modern Poets have the Advantage more by their Words, than by their Thoughts: What they say, would be very little worth, were it divested of the Expression.

XXXIII.

The most important and most necessary Part for a Poet, to make him succeed well on high Subjects, is to know well to distinguish what there is of beautiful and pleasant in Nature, that he may form thereof perpetual Images: For Poetry is an Art where every Thing should please. It is not enough to exhibit Nature which in certain Places is rude and unpleasant; he must choose in her what is beautiful, from what is not: She has her secret Graces in Subjects which he must discover. How clear-sighted must a Poet be, to discern what to choose, and what to refuse, without mistaking, that he may avoid the Object that will not please, and retain what will. Nicander, Aratus, Lucretius, in the Description they have made of natural Things, wanted this admirable Secret, which Virgil afterwards found out: He had the Art to give Delight whilst he instructed by the pleasant Images, and most exquisite Strokes of Poetry, which adorn his Georgicks, and sweeten the Harshness of those Precepts, he gives on a Subject, in it self austere and flat. It is true, Lucretius has beautiful Draughts, and Virgil understood well to copy them; without losing ought of their Perfection, because he had a Judgment to discern them; which Knowledge cannot be attain'd, but by a long Commerce with the good

Authors of Antiquity, whose Works are the only *true Sources*, whence these Riches so necessary to Poetry may be drawn, and whence is derived that *good Sense*, and that *just Discernment* which distinguishes the *true* from the *false* in *natural Beauties*: and a Poet that hath found in his Works these *happy Hits*, which are born to *please*, may rejoyce as much as the Workman that hath found a *precious Jewel*. It is not, but by the Help of his Genius, that he finds these *Beauties*, and they are made by the *Turn* given to the Things he writes.

XXXIV.

There is a particular *Rhetorick* for Poetry, which the *modern Poets* scarce understand at all; this Art consists in discerning very precisely what ought to be said *figuratively*, and what to be spoken *simply*: And in knowing well where Ornament is requir'd, and where not. Tasso understood not well this *Secret*; he is too *Trim* and too *Polite*, in Places where the *Gravity* of the *Subject* demanded a more *simple* and *serious Stile*: As for Example, where *Tancred* comes near the Tomb of *Clorinda*, he makes the unfortunate Lover, who came from slaying his Mistress, speak *Points*, instead of expressing his Sorrow *naturally*; he commits this Fault in many other Places. *Guarini* in his *Pastor Fido*, and *Bonarelli* in his *Phillis*, are often guilty of this Vice, they always think rather to speak Things wittily, than naturally: This is the most ordinary *Rock* to mean Wits, who suffer their *Fancy* to fly out after the pleasing *Images* they find in their Way: they rush into the Description of *Groves*, *Rivers*, *Fountains*, and *Temples*, which *Horace* calls *childish*, in his Book of *Poesie*. 'Tis only

only the Talent of great Men to know to *speak*, and to be *silent*; to be *florid*, and to be *plain*; to be *lofty*, and to be *low*; to use *Figures*, and to *speak simply*; to mingle *Fiction* and *Ornament* as the *Subject* requires: Finally, to manage all well in his *Subject*, without pretending to give *Delight*, where he should only *Instruct*, and without *rising in great Thoughts*, where *natural* and *common Sentiments* are required; a *simple Thought* in its proper Place, is more worth than all the most *exquisite Words* and *Wit* out of Season. *Fancy*, which is all the *Wit* of common Writers, apprehends not this; this *Discernment* puts on a Kind of *Dishabillé*, as most proper to Poetry, and is a pure Effect of the *Judgment*.

X X X V.

Yet is there in Poetry, as in other *Arts*, certain *Things* that *cannot be expressed*, which are (as it were) *Mysteries*. There are no Precepts to teach the *hidden Graces*, the *insensible Charms*, and all that *secret Power* of Poetry which passes to the *Heart*, as there is no Method to teach to *please*, 'tis a pure Effect of *Nature*. However, *Nature* alone can never *please* regularly, unless in the small *Compositions*: there must be the Assistance of *Art* to succeed well in the great *Poems*. 'Tis by this Help that a *Genius* a little cultivated, shall *range* his *Thoughts* in that admirable Order, which makes the greatest Beauty in the Productions of *Wit*: By this Order, every Thing becomes delightful, because, as *Horace* saith, 'tis in its Place; but this is the Work of *Judgment*, as *Invention* the Work of *Imagination*; and this Order that keeps all right, and without which the most beautiful become *deform'd*, is a *Mystery* but little known to *modern Poets*.

XXXVI.

Next to Order, the greatest Delight of Poetry comes from the Manners, and from the Passions, when they are well handled. *If you would have Applause, saith Horace to the Poet, learn well to distinguish the Manners of every Age, and the Characters proper to them in General and in Particular.* It was by this great Secret that Menander got that high Reputation at Athens, as appears by the Testimony of Plutarch, and that Terence so exceedingly pleas'd the Romans; never Poet better understood the Manners, than these two. Plato affirms, in the ninth Book of his *Commonwealth*, that Homer had particularly signaliz'd himself by the Manners of Men which he had described in his *Poems* to the Life. But that I may not repeat what hath been said in the twenty-fifth Reflection, I proceed to the Passions which give no less Grace to Poetry than the Manners: when the Poet has found the Art to make them move by their natural Springs. *Without the Passions all is cold and flat in the Discourse, saith Quintilian: for they are, as it were, the Soul and Life of it; but the Secret is to express them according to the several Estates and different Degrees from their Birth: And in this Distinction consists all the Delicacy, wherewith the Passions are to be handled, to give them that Character which renders them admirable by the secret Motions they impress on the Soul.* *He-cuba* in *Euripides* falls into a Swoon on the Stage, the better to express all the Weight of her Sorrow that could not be represented by Words. But *Achilles* appears with too much Calmness and Tranquility at the Sacrifice of *Iphigenia* de-

design'd for him in Marriage by *Agamemnon*: His Grief has Expressions too little suiting to the natural *Impetuosity* of his *Heart*. *Clytemnestra* much better preserves her *Character*, she discovers all the *Passion* of a Mother in the Loss of a Daughter, so lovely as was this *unfortunate* Princess, whom they were about to *sacrifice*, to appease the Gods: and *Agamemnon* generously lays aside the *Tenderness* of a Father, to take, as he ought, the *Sentiments* of a King; he neglected his own Interest to provide for the Publick. *Seneca*, so little *natural* as he is, omits not to have of these Strokes that distinguish the *Passion*, as that of *Phædra* in the second Act of his *Hippolitus*; for she affects a Negligence of Person, and considered it as not very proper to please a Hunter, who hated Ornament and Neatness. 'Tis finally this exact *Distinction* of the different Degrees of *Passion*, that is of most *Effect* in *Poetry*: For this gives the Draught of *Nature*, and is the most *insaluble Spring* for moving the Soul; but it is good to observe, that the most *ardent* and *lively Passions* become cold and dead, if they be not well managed, or not in their Place. The Poet must judge when there must be a Calm, and when there must be Trouble; for nothing is more ridiculous, than *Passion* out of Season. But it is not enough to move a *Passion* by a *notable Incident*, there must be *Art* to *conduct* it so far as it should go; for by a *Passion* that is imperfect and abortive, the Soul of the *Spectator* may be *shaken*; but this is not enough, it must be *reviv'd*.

XXXVII.

Besides the *Graces* that *Poetry* finds in displaying the *Manners* and the *Passions*; There is a certain *I know not what*, in the *Numbers*, which is understood by few, and notwithstanding gives great *Delight* in *Poetry*. *Homer* hath excelled generally all the *Poets* by this *Art*; whether the *Nature* of his *Language* was favourable to him, by the *Variety* in the *Numbers*, and by the noble *Sound* of the *Words*: or that the *Delicacy* of his *Ear* made him perceive this *Grace*, whereof the other *Poets* of his *Time* were not sensible; for his *Verse* found the most harmoniously that can be imagin'd. *Athenaus* pretends that nothing is more proper to be sung than the *Verses* of *Homer*, so natural is the *Harmony* of them; 'tis true, I never read this *Poet*, or hear him read, but I feel what is found in a *Battle*, when the *Trumpets* are heard. *Virgil*, who had a nice *Ear*, did not imitate *Homer* in this, further than the *Harshness*, or rather the *Heaviness* of the *Latin Tongue* permitted him. *Ennius* had not then in his *Days* discovered this *Grace*, which is in the *Numbers*, whereof appears no *Foot-step* in his *Verses*. *Lucretius* perceiv'd it first, but gave only the imperfect *Strokes* of this *Beauty* in *Versification*, which *Virgil* finish'd so far as the *Language* was capable. The other *Poets*, as *Ovid* in his *Metamorphoses*, *Statius* in his two *Poems*, *Valerius Flaccus* in his *Argonautes*, *Silius Italicus* in his *Hannibal*, *Claudian* in his *Ravishment* of *Proserpina* never went so far. Among the modern *Poets* that have writ in *Latin* of late *Days*, those who could attain to the *Numbers*, and *Cadence* of *Virgil* in the *Turn* of their *Verses*, have

have had most Reputation ; and because that *Buchanan*, who otherwise had *Wit*, *Fancy*, and a pure *Stile*, perceiv'd not this *Grace*, or neglected it, he hath lost much of his *Price* ; perhaps nothing was wanting to make him an accomplish'd Poet, but this Perfection which most certainly is not *chimerical* ; and whoever shall reflect a little on the Power of the *Dorian*, *Lydian*, and *Phrygian* *Airs*, whereof *Aristotle* speaks in his *Problems*, and *Athenæus* in his *Banquets* ; he may acknowledge what Vertue there is in *Number* and *Harmony* : It is a *Beauty* unknown to the *French* Tongue, where all the *Syllables* are counted in the Verses, and where there is no *Diversity* of *Cadence*.

XXXVIII.

There yet remain *Beauties* and *Ornaments*, whereof each Tongue is capable, and these the Poet must understand, and must not confound, when he writes in another Tongue, than those he proposes for Models, which *Virgil* hath well observ'd in imitating *Homer* ; for he did not give himself over to follow him servilely in the exact Turn of his Versification : He knew withal that those big Words which make a *Beauty* at the End of the *Greek* Verses, would have been no *Elegancy* in the *Latin* ; because, in effect, this succeeds not with *Lucretius*. *Virgil* found that the Character of the *Latin* Tongue requir'd Numbers too severe, as *Martial* observes, to allow of that licentious Cadence, which was familiar with the *Greek*. *Horace*, who propos'd the *Odes* of *Pindar* for the Model of those he wrote in *Latin*, quitted immediately the Numbers and the Turn of that Author's Verse, of which he found the *Latin* Tongue

Tongue uncappable, as the *French Poetry* is not accommodated to the *Numbers* of the *Spanish* and *Italian*, because every Language is confined within certain *Bounds*, which makes the *Beauty* of their *Character*. 'Tis a great Art to know these *Beauties*, and well to distinguish them each from other; but besides the *Numbers* that are particular to each Tongue, there is also a certain *Turn of the Period* which makes the *Cadence* and the *Harmony*, of which none ought to be ignorant. How many are there of the *modern Poets*, who have endeavour'd to imitate *Virgil*, without being able to attain this admirable *Turn*, which renders him so majestic? *Sannazarius*, *Fracastorius*, *Sadoletus*, *Saint Marthe* come somewhat nigh it, the others never so much as understood it. This *Cast of the Period* which is proper to each kind of Verse, is necessary for expressing their *Character*; it must be *grave*, and the *Numbers* thick in *heroick*, in *tragick* Verse, and in *Odes*; it must be *soft* and *easy* in the *little Verse* and *delicate Subjects*.

XXXIX.

Besides all the *Rules* taken from *Aristotle*, there remains one mention'd by *Horace*, to which all the other *Rules* must be subject, as to the most *essential*, which is the *Decorum*, without which the other *Rules* of *Poetry* are false; it being the most *solid Foundation* of that *Probability* so *essential* to this Art. Because it is only by the *Decorum* that this *Probability* gains its *Effects*; all becomes *probable*, where the *Decorum* is strictly preserv'd in all its *Circumstances*. One ordinarily *transgresses* this *Rule*, either by confounding the *Serious* with the

Plea:

Pleasant, as *Pulci* has done in his Poem of *Morgante*; or by giving *Manners* disproportionate to the Condition of the Persons, as *Guarini* has done to his *Shepherds*; which are too polite, in like Manner as those of *Ronsard* are too gross; or because no Regard is had to make the wonderful Adventures probable, whereof *Ariosto* is guilty in his *Orlando*; or that a due Preparation is not made for the great Events by a natural Conduct, in which *Bernardo Tasso* transgressed in his Poem of *Amadis*, and his *Floridante*; or by Want of Care to sustain the Characters of Persons, as *Theophile* in his Tragedy of *Pyramus* and *Thisbe*; or by following rather a capricious Genius than Nature, as *Lope de Vega*, who gives his Wit too much Swing, and is ever foisting in his own Fancies on all Occasions; or by Want of Modesty, as *Dante*, who invokes his own Wit for his Deity; and as *Boccace*, who is perpetually speaking of himself; or by saying every Thing indifferently without Shame, as Cavalier *Marino* in his *Adonis*. Finally, whatever is against the Rules of Time, of Manners, of Thoughts, of Expressions, is contrary to the Decorum, which is the most universal of all the Rules.

X L.

And to close, in a last Reflection, all the others that can be made, the Poet must understand that the great Secret of the Art is to work his Matter well, and to execute happily what he had design'd with all the Attention his Subject requires; that he know always, that in great Works he may be negligent in certain Places, which regularly ought to be neglected; that all may not be finish'd alike, and what is

finish'd

finish'd may appear so the more, among the studied *Negligences*. These *Strokes* less perfect than the rest, and these *Inequalities* of Expression which Art requires, are as necessary to *Poesie*, as the *Shades* to a *Painter*, which serve to give *Lustre* to the other Parts of his Work. 'Tis the Fault of the mean *Wits* to express Things more high than they ought to be expressed. So the Poet must take heed that he run not with the young *Writers* into the *florid Stile*, by his excessive *Ornaments* and far-fetch'd *Beauties*; that he retrench boldly what is too luxuriant; for all becomes false in *Poetry* that glitters too much. The Poet is in no wise *natural*, who would be always speaking *fine Things*: He will not be so prodigal of his *Wit*, when he has *Wit* form'd as it ought to be; for all he *speaks* is worth nothing, if he will be speaking *too finely*. The Course he must take to come at *good Sense*, is to have yet a greater Care in his Expression of *Things*, than in his *Words*, because it is in the *Things* he must search the *principal Graces* of his *Discourse*. The *Discourse* must be diversify'd by the *Variety* of *Expressions*, because the same Images tire the Mind of the Reader: and there must not only be frequent *Figures* in the *Words*, but also different *Turns* in the *Thoughts*. The narrow and limited *Wits* are always finding themselves, and by the *Barrenness* of their *Genius*, become like that *Player of the Lute* in *Horace*, who could only *strike on one String*. For the rest, it is good to be mindful, that none must meddle with making of *Verses*, who does not make them *excellently*, and does not *distinguish* himself from others. For since none is oblig'd to make them, to what End should he *crack* his Brain, and *hazard* his Reputation, unless he acquit him-

himself well? He may know likewise that Poetry will be no Honour to Men of little Sense; and that the Appetite of Verse-making is a dangerous Malady when it seizes on an indifferent Wit; that he is liable to all Extravagancies imaginable, who is taken therewith and wants a Genius: That he should be endu'd with Submission, and be docible, that he fall not into this Misfortune. For after the manner Men live at present, he may find every where some or other who out of Charity, or ill Humour, are always ready to give him Advice: That the greatest Fault of a Poet is to be indocible; and that nothing has made so many bad Poets, as Flattery, which will be continually buzzing in his Ears, and daubing him on that Occasion so soon as he begins to tamper with writing Verse; especially it is to be consider'd, that he should apply himself betimes to this Mystery, to attain any Perfection, that he may form his Imagination to that delicate Air, which is not to be had but from the first Idea's of our Youth. Julius and Joseph Scaliger could not succeed herein; for having begun this Study too late, neither of them could overcome the Stiffness of their Genius, which had before bent their Wit another way: And though the Son was more polite than his Father, yet had he nothing of Elegancy, or graceful in his Poetry, no more than the other learned Men of his Time; and that he who aspires to the Glory of this Profession, may reckon that he hath much more to lose, than to gain, by writing Verse, in an Age so squeamish as this of ours. We are no longer in that Age, when Men got Reputation by their fool-hardy Writing: Then it was no difficult Matter to impose, seeing what glitter'd was more respected than what was Solid: and

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one may reflect that nothing can now succeed in *Poetry*, unless it be *delicately conceiv'd*, and *formed* with the utmost *Regularity*, and *set off* with all the *Grace* and *Happiness* of *Expression*: that Verses are not *tolerable*, if but *indifferent*; and are *ridiculous*, unless they be *admirable*. That, finally, true *Poetry* is not perceiv'd, but by the *Impression* it makes on the *Soul*; it is not as it should be, unless it go to the *Heart*: Hence it is that *Homer* *animates* me, *Virgil* *heats* me, and all the rest *freeze* me, so *cold* and *flat* they are.

This is what may be said in *General* of *Poetry*, after follows the *Particular*.

R E.

REFLECTIONS
ON
Aristotle's Book
OF
POESIE
IN PARTICULAR.

I.

ARISTOTLE distinguishes POESIE into Three divers Kinds of perfect POEMS, the *Ethick*, the *Tragick*, and the *Comick*. *Horace* reduces these Three into Two only; One whereof consists in *Action*, the Other in *Narration*; all the other Kinds whereof *Aristotle* makes mention, may be brought to these Two, the *Comedy* to the *Dramatick*, the *Satyr* to the *Comedy*, the *Ode* and *Eclogue* to the *heroick Poem*; for the *Sonnet*, *Madrigal*, *Epigram*, &c. are only a Sort of *imperfect Poems*; it is the *Poet's Part* to consult his

his Strength in the different Ways he must hold in the different *Characters of Verse*, that he may not do Violence to his *Genius*.

II.

The *epick Poem* is that which is the *greatest* and most *noble* in *Poesie*; it is the *greatest Work* that human Wit is capable of. All the *Nobleness*, and all the *Elevation* of the most perfect *Genius*, can hardly suffice to form one such as is requisite for an *heroick Poet*; the Difficulty of finding together *Fancy* and *Judgment*, *Heat* of *Imagination*, and *Sobriety* of *Reason*, *Precipitation* of *Spirit*, and *Solidity* of *Mind*, causes the *Rareness* of this *Character*, and of this happy *Temperament*, which makes a Poet accomplish'd; it requires *great Images*, and yet a *greater Wit* to form them. Finally, there must be a *Judgment* so solid, a *Discernment* so exquisite, such perfect *Knowledge* of the *Language* in which he writes, such obstinate *Study*, profound *Meditation*, vast *Capacity*, that scarce whole *Ages* can produce one *Genius* fit for an *epick Poem*. And it is an *Enterprize* so bold, that it cannot fall into a wise Man's Thoughts, but affright him. Yet how many Poets have we seen of late Days, who, without *Capacity*, and without *Study*, have dared to undertake these Sort of Poems; having no other *Foundation* for all, but only the *Heat* of their *Imagination*, and some *Briskness* of *Spirit*.

III.

But another *Hindrance* to this *Character*, is to have a Wit too *vast*; for such will make nothing *exact* in these Kind of Works, whose chief

chief Perfection is the *Justness*. These Wits that strike at all, are apt to pass the Bounds; the *Swing* of their *Genius* carries them to Irregularity; nothing they do is exact, because their *Wit* is not: All that they say, and all that they imagine, is always *Vast*; they neither have Proportion in the *Design*, nor *Justness* in the *Thought*, nor *Exactness* in the *Expression*. The Fault is common to the most of the modern Poets, especially to the *Spaniards*, as *Diego Ximenes*, in his Poem of *Cid Ruydias de Bivar*; *Camoens* in his *Conquest of the Indians* by the Portuguese: And among the *Italians*, *Boiardo*, *Ariosto*, Cavalier *Marino*, and *Chiabrera*, whose Works are very ill Patterns for an *epick* Poem: They perpetually *Digress*, yet there is always *Wit* in their *Digressions*. The *French*, who pretend to *Wit*, and love *Wit* even in Trifles, suffer'd themselves to be blinded with the Poems of *Ariosto* and Cavalier *Marino*. The Beauty of their Verse, their Expression, the pleasant Images they make of Things they Treat of, and the Charms of their Verse, have so enchanted most Part of these *French* Poets, that they have not seen the gross Enormities of Judgment those Authors run into. This is ordinary with Poets that have *Wit*, and little *Judgment*; they endeavour to hide what is irregular in their Works, by glittering Faults, and false Beauties; but they must have a great Judgment and *Wisdom* to sustain a great *Design* in the utmost regularity.

IV.

The Value of *heroick Poesie* is yet more *High* by the *Matter*, and by its *End*, than by its *Form*; it Discourses not but of *Kings* and
 O Prin-

Arist.
Poet. cap.
10.

Princes ; it gives not Lessons but to the *Grande*s to govern the People, and sets before them the *Idea* of a *Vertue* much more perfect than *History* can do ; for *History* proposes not *Vertue*, but imperfect as it is found in the *Particulars* ; and *Poetry* proposes it free from all *Imperfections*, and as it ought to be in *General*, and in the *Abstract*. This made *Aristotle* confess, That *Poesie* is a better *School of Vertue*, than *Philosophy* it self, because it goes more directly to *Perfection* by the *Verisimilitude*, than *Philosophy* can do with the *naked Truth*. And because the *Poet* gives not *Reason* for what he saith, as the *Philosopher*, but the *Reason* must be perceiv'd without his speaking it.

V.

Poesie in *General* is a *Picture* or *Imitation* of an *Action* ; and *heroick Poesie* is the *Imitation* or *Picture* of an *heroick Action*, as *Aristotle* informs us. The *Qualifications* he gives to this *Action*, are, that it be *One*, and *Simple*, *True*, or that passes for *True*, and that it ought to be *Happy*, *Commendable*, and *Entire*. He believes that it must be *One* and *Simple*, to avoid *Confusion* ; that it must be *True* to deserve *Credit* ; *Happy* and *Commendable* to serve for a *Pattern* and *Instruction* to the *Grande*s, and to be a publick *Example of Vertue*. Finally, it must be *Entire*, that there may be nothing in it *Imperfect*. These *Conditions* are so essential to the *Action*, which is to serve for the *Subject* of an *heroick Poem*, that it is altogether *Defective*, if any one of them be wanting ; but to the End the *Action* may be entirely *Perfect* in a *Poem*, all must go in a direct *Line* to establish the *Merit* of the *Hero*, and to distinguish him from all others:

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As the *Figures* in a Table ought to have nothing so shining either by the Colours, or by the Lights that may divert the Eyes from the principal Figure. 'Tis in this that *Tasso* was mistaken; who in his Poem of the *Conquest* of *Hierusalem*, makes *Rinaldo* do all that is shining and extraordinary; it is *Rinaldo* that slays *Adrastus*, *Tysartnes*, *Solyman*, and all the principal Leaders of the Enemy: 'Tis he that breaks the Charm of the enchanted Forest; the most important Episodes are reserv'd for him; nothing is done in his absence; he alone is call'd out to all the great Actions. *Godfrey*, who is the Hero, has nothing to do; and it is in vain that *Tasso* would excuse this Fault by the Allegory in a long Treatise made to that End; that is, to justify one *Chimera* with another. *Homer*, whose Sense was more right, by a Spirit altogether contrary, makes *Achilles*, who is his Hero, do all; though it is true, he strays sometimes too far from him, and forgets him. *Virgil* never falls into this Fault; one shall never lose the Sight of *Aeneas* in the *Aeneid*, as he does of *Achilles* in the *Iliad*.

VI.

The Action must neither be too vast, nor too much limited, it must have a just Greatness within the natural Proportion of an heroick Action to be perfect. The War of *Troy* that lasted ten Years, had been a Matter disproportion'd for a Poem; so great an Object had surpris'd the Wit, and a natural Action of the same Man cannot regularly be of that continuance; but neither ought it to be too much limited, lest it become despicable by the Littleness. Hence it is that the Poem of *Gabriel*

Chiabrera on the *Conquest* of *Rhodes* by *Amedee* of *Savoy*, is in some measure defective in the *Action*, which lasts but four Days. For great *Atchievements*, to be extraordinary, are not perform'd but by slow Means, and *Intrigues* wrought and woven with a long Thread, with Persons often absent and remote, more Time is necessary to move the *Springs* of great *Designs*. Besides, in the *Precipitation* of so short Time, the *Events* cannot be prepar'd, the *Characters* sustain'd, the *Incidents* manag'd, the *Manners* observ'd, and nothing works as it should do in these great *Machines*; and the *Probability* is throughout destroy'd.

VII.

The *Unity* of the *Action*, however simple and scrupulous it ought to be, is no Enemy to those Delights which naturally arise from *Variety*, when the *Variety* is attended with that *Order* and that *Proportion* which makes *Uniformity*; as one Palace may contain the various Ornaments of Architecture, and a great Diversity of Parts, provided it be built in the same *Order*, and after the same *Design*. This *Variety* hath a large Field in *heroick Poesie*; the *Enterprizes* of War, the *Treaties* of Peace, *Ambassies*, *Negotiations*, *Voyages*, *Councils*, *Debates*, building of *Palaces* and *Towns*, *Manners*, *Passions*, unexpected *Discoveries*, unforeseen and surprizing *Revolutions*, and the different *Images* of all that happens in the Lives of great Men, may there be employ'd, so be that all go to the same End; without this *Order* the most beautiful *Figures* become monstrous, and like those *Extravagances* that *Horace* taxes as ridiculous, in the Beginning of his *Book* of *Poesie*.

VIII.

It is particularly by the *Art of Episodes*, that this great *Variety of Matters* which adorn a Poem, is brought into the principal *Action*; but though the *Episodes* are a Kind of Digression from the *Subject*, being an Adventure wholly foreign, that is added to the principal *Action* to adorn it; yet, however, it ought to have a natural *Relation* to the principal *Action*, to make thereof a *Work* that hath *Order* and *Proportion*; and therefore must the *Decorum* of *Persons*, of *Time*, and of *Place*, be preserv'd. Without this Condition the *Episode* is no longer *Probable*, and there appears an *Air of Affectation*, which becomes ridiculous: Which *Horace* reproaches to the witless Poets, who would be gay on grave *Subjects*, and search foreign *Ornaments*, where only the natural were proper. The *Episodes* of *Lucan*, who makes long *scholastick Dissertations* and *Disputes* merely *speculative*, on Things that fall in his Way, shew much of *Constraint* and *Affectation*. But besides that the *Episode* must be natural, and never far-fetch'd, it is to be handled with a certain *Management* and *Dexterity*, that it may not lie in the Way to make *Confusion*, nor burthen the *Subject* with too much *Action*. 'Tis for this Cause *Aristotle* so greatly blames the *episodical Fables*; and it is also in this that the *Art of Homer* principally appears, who never confounds any Thing in the Throng of Objects he represents; never was Poem more charg'd with Matter than the *Iliad*, yet never any Thing appear'd more simple or more natural; for every Thing there is in due Order. Any too licentious *Parachronism* may render an *Episode* defe-

defective and imperfect, though that of *Dido* in the fourth of the *Aeneid* is pardonable by the admirable Effect it produceth ; and in so great an *Elongation* of Times as those of *Aeneas* and *Dido*, the Poet need not be a Slave to *Chronology*. The most natural *Episodes* are most proper to circumstantiate the principal Action best, that are the *Causes*, the *Effects*, the *Beginnings*, and the *Consequences* of it ; but we find not always these Qualifications in *Tasso*, who seeks to please often by Passages that are too *glittering* ; and much less in *Ariosto*, whose *Episodes* are too affected, never probable, never prepar'd, and often without any dependance on his Subject ; as that of King *Agramante* and *Marfisa* ; but these Things are not to be expected from a Poem, where the *Heroes* are *Paladins* ; and where predominates an Air of *chimerical* and *romantick Knight-Errantry*, rather than any *heroick Spirit*.

IX.

Though all must be *natural* in an *epick Poem*, yet the Order that is observ'd in relating Things, ought not so to be ; were it *natural*, and according to the Succession of Time, it would be a *History* and not a *Poem* ; and thereby one would fall into the same Fault with the *impertinent Scribbler*, whom *Horace* makes ridiculous, who began his Poem of the Trojan War, with the Loves of Jupiter and Leda, and with the Birth of Helen, who was the Cause of the War : For to render the *Narration* more insinuating, delightful, and surprizing, the Poet must confound the natural Order of Times and Things, to make thereof one purely *Artificial*. 'Tis by this Maxim, that the Poem

Poem of *Nonnus* upon *Bacchus*, the *Thebaid* of *Statius*, and the Poems of the first *Italians*, who writ before they knew the Rules of *Aristotle*; and some *Spanish* Poems, as that of *Diego Ximenes*, on the Conquest of *Valentia*, are so defective.

X.

The principal Character of an *heroick Poem* consists in the *Narration*; 'tis in this that it is oppos'd to the *Dramatick*, which consists altogether in the *Action*; but as nothing is more difficult than to relate Things, as one ought, the Poet must employ all his Art to succeed herein. The Qualities a *Narration* must have to be perfect, are these; it must be short and succinct, that nothing may be *idle*, *flat*, or *tedious*; it must be *lively*, *quick*, and *delightful*, that it may have nothing but what is *attractive*: Finally, it must be *simple* and *natural*; but it is a great Art to know to relate Things simply, and yet the *Simplicity* not appear. The most ordinary Graces of a *Narration* must come from the *Figures*, the *Transitions*, and from all those delicate *Turns*, that carry the Reader from one Thing to another without his regarding it; and in this chiefly consists all the Artifice of the *Narration*. It must never pour out all the *Matter*, that some Place may always be left for the natural Reflections of the Reader; it must likewise avoid the *Particulars* and the *Length* of affected Description. Homer, great Speaker as he is, amuses not himself, says *Lucian*, to discourse of the Torments of the Unhappy in Hell, when *Ulysses* descended thither; though this was a fair Occasion for him. But the Poet, when he is judicious, makes no Descrip-

tions, but to clear the *Matters*, and never to shew his Wit. Finally, the Narration must be *delightful*, not only by the Variety of Things it relates, but likewise by the Variety of the *Numbers*. 'Tis this Variety that makes the *Greek Versification* more harmonious, and more proper for *Narration*, than the *Latin*; and though *Tasso* has been successful enough in the *Narrations* of his Poem, and likewise *Ariosto*, who, to me seems more *natural* than he; yet the *Pauses* and *Interruptions* to which the *Italian Poésie* is subjected, by the *Stanza's*, do weaken, methinks, and enervate that Force and Vigour which makes one Part of the *Character* of *heroick Verse*. That *Monotony* of the *Alexandrin Verse* which can suffer no Difference, nor any Variety of Numbers, seems to me likewise a great Weakness in the *French Poetry*: And though the Vigour of the Verse might be sustain'd either by the great Subjects, or by an extraordinary *Genius* and *Wit* above the common Rate, yet this Sort of Verse will grow tedious and irksome in a long Poem. For the rest, one shall scarce ever meet with *Narrations* that are continued with the same Force, and the same Spirit, except in *Homer* and *Virgil*. It is true, the *Narration* of the Death of *Polyxena* in the *Hecuba* of *Euripides*, is the most lively, and most moving in the World; and that of *Tecmessa* in the *Ajax* of *Sophocles*, is the most tender and most passionate that can be imagin'd. 'Tis by these great Models that a *Poet* must learn to be pathetical in what he relates, without amusing himself to make subtle and witty *Narrations*, by ridiculous *Affectations*. In the other *Greek* and *Latin Poets*, are found only some imperfect Essays of *Narrations*. He, among the *Moderns*, who has the best *Genius*

to sustain all the Nobleness of a Narration in heroick Verse, is *Hierom Vida* Bishop of *Alba*, in his Poem on the Death of *Jesus Christ*; and if sometimes he fell not into low Expressions, and Harshnesses, like those of *Lucretius*, his Stile had been incomparable. *Scaliger* objects against the long Narrations which *Homer* makes his Heroes speak in the heat and fury of a Battle; in effect this is neither natural nor probable: Neither can I approve the Descriptions of *Alcina's* Palace in *Ariosto*, nor of *Armida's* in *Tasso*, no more than the Particulars of the pleasant Things which both of them mix in their Narrations; hereby they degenerate from their Character, and shew a Kind of Puerility that is in no wise conformable to the Gravity of an heroick Poem, where all ought to be majestick.

XI.

Nothing is more essential to an *epick Poem* than Fiction, which ought to reign throughout, Fiction being its Soul. 'Tis by this that the most common Things take a Character of Greatness and Sublimity, which renders them extraordinary and admirable. *Aristotle* gave but the Shadow of this Precept, which *Petronius* has drawn more fully, by these Words, *per ambages deorumque ministeria precipitandus est liber spiritus*. 'Tis thus that meanest Things become noble; that *Thetis*, in *Homer*, throws her self at the Feet of *Jupiter*; that the Gods assemble in Council, where arise great Debates, their Spirits grow warm, and all Heaven is divided into Parties; for what? because, indeed, *Achilles's* Mistress was taken from him, which at the Bottom is but a Trifle. 'Tis by this great Art that
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all Voyages, and indeed every Step that *Telemachus* made in the *Odyssæis*, to seek his Father *Ulysses*, became considerable, because *Minerva* is of his *Retinue*, and of his *Council*; and all became remarkable, by the Impression they receiv'd from the Conduct of a Deity, that presides over Wisdom. 'Tis finally by this that *Virgil* gives greatness and lustre to the meanest Things he speaks. If *Aeneas* break a Bough, in the third of his *Aeneid*, to pay a pious Duty to a Tomb that he finds accidentally in his Way, the Ghost of *Polydorus* speaks to him from the Bottom of the Tomb, and makes an *Episode*. If *Aruns* draw an Arrow in the eleventh Book, it is by the Direction of *Apollo*, who does interest himself therein to kill *Camilla*. Finally, all has relation to the Gods, and their Ministry, even to the least Actions that are describ'd in this Poem, to heighten the Lustre of all that is there done, in that marvellous Way, whereof *Aristotle* gives so admirable Lessons.

XII.

But the Importance is, as I before have observ'd, that this *admirable* be *probable*, by a just mixture and temperament of the one and the other. For the heroick Action which the Poet proposes to *imitate*, must be render'd not only worthy of *Admiration*, but also of *Credit*, to attain its End. The Poets ordinarily are carried without Consideration to speak *incredible* Things, whilst they aim too much at the *Marvellous*; they thrust imprudently into the *Fable*, without managing the Truth, because they would please, without taking care to persuade; and they scarce ever think of the *Preparations*, and all the Colours of Decency that must be

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employ'd, whereon to ground the *Verisimilitude*. And 'tis thus that by a false *Idea* they have of *Poesie*, they place its Beauty in the pleasant Surprizes of Something extraordinary wonderful: Whereas, in Truth, it is not regularly to be found, but in *what is natural and probable*. For the sure way to the Heart is not by surprizing the Spirit; and all becomes *incredible* in Poetry, that appears *Incomprehensible*. Scarce any of the Poets but *Virgil*, had the Art, by the Preparation of Incidents, to manage the *Probability* in all the Circumstances of an heroick Action. *Homer* is not altogether so scrupulous and regular in his Contrivances; his *Machins* are less just, and all the *Measures* he takes to save the *Probability*, are less exact; I shall not give a *Particular* in a Subject, where I only allow my self to make Reflections on the general Principles of *Poesie*. Many Reflections may be made in the Works of both the ancient and modern Poets, on the Subject of this Observation; for the Necessity of *Probability* is a great check to the Poets, who think to make the Incidents the more heroick, by how much more wonderful and more surprizing they be, without regarding whether they be *natural*.

XIII.

Finally, the soveraign Perfection of an epick Poem, in the Opinion of *Aristotle*, consists in the just Proportion of all the Parts. The Marvellous of Tragedy consists in the *pathetical* Stile; but the Marvellous of an heroick Poem is that perfect Connexion, that just Agreement and the admirable Relation that the Parts of this great Work have each to other, as the Perfection of a great Palace, consists in the

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Uniformity of Design, and in the Proportion of Parts. It is this Symmetry that *Horace* so much commends in the Beginning of his Book of *Poesie*, where he taxes the Ridiculousness of the extravagant Disproportions in the Picture he speaks of; and which he compares to the prodigious Adventures of *Dolphins in the Forests*, and *wild Boars in the Seas*, and all the other Images he so much blames, because disproportionable to the Subject. And this Proportion that *Aristotle* demands, is not only in the *Quantity* of the *Parts*, but likewise in the *Quality*: In which Point, *Tasso* is very faulty, who mixes in his Poem the light Character with the *Serious*; and all the Force and Majesty of *Heroick*, with the Softness and Delicacy of the *Eclogue* and *Lyrick Poesie*. For the *Shepherd's* Adventures with *Herminia*, in the *seventh* Canto, and the Letters of her *Lover's* Names, which she carv'd on the Bark of *Bays* and *Beeches*, the *Moan* she made to the *Trees* and *Rocks*, and *purling Streams*, the *embroidered Meadows*, the *Singing of Birds*, in which the Poet himself took so much Pleasure: The *enchanted Wood* in the *thirteenth* Canto, the *Songs of Armida* in the *fourteenth*, to inspire *Rinaldo* with Love, the *Caresses* this Sorcerer made him, the Description of her Palace, where nothing is breath'd but Softness and Effeminacy, and those other affected Descriptions have nothing of that grave and majestick Character, which is proper for *heroick* Verse. 'Tis thus that *Sannazarius* in his Poem, *De Partu Virginis*, has injudiciously mingled the Fables of *Paganism* with the Mysteries of *Christian Religion*; as also *Camoens*, who speaks without Discretion, of *Venus* and *Bacchus*, and the other prophane Deities in a

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christian Poem. It is not sufficient that all be grand and magnificent in an *epick* Poem, all must be just, uniform, proportionable in the different Parts that compose it.

XIV.

This Proportion of Parts is so essential to *Heroick*, that it ought likewise to be (if I may so say) the Soul of all little Poems; as are *Epithalamiums*, *Panegyricks*, and others that are made on the Birth, and brave Actions of great Men; and these Poems are so far perfect, as they have that Unity and Proportion of Parts, requisite for a compleat Work. In this ordinarily are faulty the *Panegyrist*s, and all those pretended Poets, that seek to make their Fortune, by making their Court to great Persons. For besides that, there is nothing more difficult, than to praise, and that by so bold an Enterprize, one ordinarily exposes himself to be render'd ridiculous, as well as those he commends, because he does it ill; the common Undertakers, in this Kind, who have not Force to form handsomely a Design, loose the Reins to their Fancy; and after they have pil'd a heap of gross and deformed Praises without Order or Connection one upon another, this forsooth, must be call'd a *Panegyrick*. 'Tis thus that *Claudian* has prais'd the Emperor *Honorius* and the Consuls *Probinus*, *Olybrius*, *Stilicon*, and the other illustrious Persons of his Time. Throughout all his *Panegyrick* reigns an *Air of Youthfulness*, that has nothing of what is *solid*, though there appear some Wit. I speak not of *Ausonius*, nor *Prudentius*, and the *Latin* Poets, who have writ *Panegyricks*; because all of them have writ after this

this Manner, and yet more feebly, according to the *Decline* of the Ages in which they writ. *Tibullus* himself, otherwise so exact and polite in his Elegies, falls short in his *Panegyrick* of *Messala*; so hard it is to praise well. And nothing perhaps has contributed more to render the Character of a Poet a little ridiculous, than the vile and unmanly Flatteries whereby most Part of those that profess'd *Poetry* have debas'd themselves. For a Man always praises ill, when he praises for Interest; and there is nothing but these sottish Praises that bring a disparagement on Poets. What Art, what Springs, what Turns, what Wit must be employ'd, to praise well, and how few are capable to do it? For Praise has always something gross in it, if it lie too open, and go in a direct Line. *Voiture*, one of the most delicate Wits of these latter Ages, never scarce commended any but in *Drollery*; and it may be said, that of a long Time none has done it with more Success. The true Models that ought to be taken, to Praise well, are the Poems of *Homer* and *Virgil*; *Homer* praises not *Achilles*, but by the simple and bare Relation of his Actions; and never was Man prais'd so delicately, as *Augustus* by *Virgil*; it is not, but, as it were, by covert Paths that he conducts him to *Glory*. There was not a *Roman* that had any Thing of Understanding, who knew not well that *Virgil* commended not the Piety of *Aeneas*, but to honour that of *Augustus*, whose Portrait he draws in his *Hero*; for whatever the Poet says of the one is only for the other. Whereby, one may say, that never Man knew better the Art of Praising; for he saves all the Modesty of the Person he praiseth, even whilst he overwhelms him with Praise. Finally, the true Art of Praising, is to

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say *laudable Things* simply, but delicately; for Praises are not to be endur'd, unless they be fine and hidden. The Truth is, 'tis so hard a Thing to Praise as one ought, that it is a Rock, which they that are wise should shun. And since the Poets are ordinarily too lavish in this Kind, they may make Advantage sometimes of this Reflection, to save their Reputation, that whilst they pretend to give Honour to Particulars, themselves be not pitied by the Publick. This is all that can be observ'd most *essential* to an *epick Poem*; and now follows a Judgment that may be made of those who have writ in this Kind of *Poësie*.

XV.

Homer is the most perfect *Model* of the *heroick Poësie*; and he only, saith *Aristotle*, deserves the Name of Poet; 'tis certain, never Man had a more happy *Genius*. *Dionysius Halicarnassæus* commends him chiefly for the Contrivance of his *Design*, the *Greatness and Majesty* of his *Expression*, the sweet and passionate Motions of his *Sentiments*. *Hesiod*, saith he, was content to be delightful, and to speak well. All the other Greek Poets that writ in this Sort of Verse, have acquitted themselves so meanly, that they have gain'd with Posterity a Reputation only proportionable to the Poorness of their *Genius*. *Coluthus* in his Poem of the *Rape of Helen*, has nothing considerable, the *Design* is shallow, the *Stile* cold and flat. The Poem of *Tryphiodorus* on the Taking of *Troy*, is of a gross and low Character, as likewise the *History* of *Leander* by *Musaëus*. The Poem of *Apollonius Rhodius*, on the Expedition of the *Argonauts*, is of a slender Character, and has nothing of that Nobleness
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of *Expression* of *Homer*; the *Fable* is ill invented, and the *List* of the *Argonauts* in the first Book is flat. *Quintus Calaber*, who would undertake to write the *Supplement* to the *Iliad* and *Odysses*, without having the least Sprinkling of *Homer's* easie and natural Vein, has nothing exact or regular. *Nicander* is hard, *Oppian* dry; and the Poem of *Nonnus*, not so much a Poem, as a *Romance*, or *History* of the Birth Adventures, Victories, and *Apotheosis* of *Bacchus*. The Design is too vast, the Fable ill wrought, without Art, without Order, without Probability, the Stile is Obscure and Cumber'd. For the *Latins*, never any possess'd all the Graces of *Poesie* in so eminent a Degree, as *Virgil*; he has an admirable *Taste* for what is *natural*, and exquisite Judgment for the Contrivance, and incomparable Delicacy for the Numbers, and *Harmony* of *Versification*. The Design of his Poem, well consider'd in all the Circumstances, is the most judicious, and the best devis'd that ever was, or ever will be. *Ovid* has *Wit*, *Art*, *Design* in his *Metamorphoses*; but he has *Youthfulnesses* that could hardly be pardon'd, but for the *Vivacity* of his Wit, and a certain Happiness of Fancy. *Lucan* is great and sublime, but has little Judgment. *Scaliger* blames his continual Transports; for in effect, he is excessive in his Discourse, where he affects rather to appear a Philosopher, than a Poet. *Petronius* in his little Poem of the Corruption of Rome, falls into all the Faults that he condemns; never Man gave more judicious Rules for Poetry, and never Man observ'd them worse. *Statius* is as fantastical in his *Idea's*, as in his *Expressions*; the Greatness that appears in his Stile, is more in the Words than in the Things: His two Poems

Poems have nothing in them regular; all is vast and disproportionable. *Silius Italicus* is much more regular; he owes more to his Industry than to his Nature: There seems some Judgment and Conduct in his Design, but nothing of Greatness and Nobleness in his Expression; and if one may rely on the younger *Pliny's* Judgment, there is more Art than Wit in his Poem; it is rather the History of the *Punick War*, than a Poem. That of *Valerius Flaccus* on the *Argonauts*, is incomparably mean; the Fable, the Contrivance, the Conduct, all there are of a very low Character. *Claudian* hath Wit and Fancy, but no Taste for that Delicacy of the Numbers, and that Turn of the Verse, that the Skillful admire in *Virgil*; he falls perpetually into the same Cadence; for that Cause one can hardly read him without being wearied; and he has no Elevation in any Manner. *Ausonius* and *Prudentius* had not a Genius strong enough to overcome the Grossness of the Age they liv'd in.

XVI.

For the *Modern* this Judgment may be given: In the Ages succeeding, when Letters pass'd from *Italy* into *Africk*, the *Arabians*, though lovers of Poetry, produc'd nothing of Heroick. That barbarous Air of the *Goths*, which then was spread in *Europe* over all Arts, did also mingle with Poetry; as appears by the Works of *Sidonius*, *Mamercus*, *Nemesianus*, and others, who writ then after a dry, jejune, and insipid Manner. Some Ages after these, Poësie began to flourish again in *Italy* by the Poems of *Dante*, *Petrarch*, and *Boccace*. The Poem of *Dante*, which the *Italians* of those Days call'd

a Comedy, passes for an *epick* Poem in the Opinion of *Castelvetro* ; but it is of a sad and woful Contrivance. And speaking generally, *Dante* has a Strain too profound, *Petrarch* too vast, *Boccace* too trivial and familiar, to deserve the Name of *heroick Poets* ; though they have writ with much Purity in their own Tongue, especially *Petrarch* and *Boccace*. These were followed some time after by the Comte of *Scandian*, *Matthieu Boyardo*, who made the Poem of the Loves of *Orlando* and *Angelica* ; by *Oliviero*, who writ a Poem on *Germany* ; by *Pulci* in his *Morgante* ; by *Ariosto* in his War of the *Moors* under their King *Agramante* against *Charlemagne* ; who all suffer'd their Wit to be squander'd on the Books of *Chivalry* and *Romances* of those Times. *Ariosto* has I know not what of an *epick Poem* more than the others, because he had read *Homer* and *Virgil* ; he is pure, great, sublime, admirable in the Expression ; his Descriptions are Masterpieces ; but he has no Judgment at all ; his Wit is like the fruitful Ground that together produces Flowers and Thistles ; he speaks well, but thinks ill ; and though all the Pieces of his Poem are pretty, yet the whole Work together is nothing worth, for an *epick Poem* : He had not then seen the Rules of *Aristotle* ; as *Tasso* did afterwards, who is better than *Ariosto*, whatever the Academy of *Florence* say to the contrary. For *Tasso* is more correct in his Design, more regular in the Contrivance of his Fable, and more compleat in all the Parts of his Poem, than all the other *Italians* ; but he mingles so much Gallantry in it, and Affectation, that he often forgets the Gravity of his Design, and the Dignity of his Character. I speak not of Cavalier *Marino* in his *Adonis* ; it is a very ill Model, though he have as much,

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and perhaps more Wit than others; yet it is a Sort of wild Wit that runs loose with such Eagerness after what is pleasant and glittering, throughout his whole Work, that, it seems, he has not any Relish for solid Things. *Sannazarius* and *Vida*, who were famous much about the same Time among the *Italian Poets*, one for his Poem *de partu Virginis*, the other for his of the *Passion* of our Saviour, made appear a good Genius for writing in *Latin*; for the Purity of their *Stile* is admirable; but the Contrivance of their *Fable* has no Delicateness, their Manner is in no wise proportionable to the Dignity of their Subject. *Pontanus*, *Politian*, *Cardinal Sadolet*, *Paleotti*, *Strozzi*, *Cardinal Bembo*, and many other *Italians*, writ at the same time, in *Latin* pure enough, but with a very indifferent Wit. *Camoens*, who is the only heroick Poet of *Portugal*, regarded only to express the haughtiness of his Nation, in his Poem of the *Conquest* of the *Indies*. For he is fierce and fastuous in his Composition, but has little Discernment, and little Conduct. *Buchanan*, who is a *Scotch* Poet, has a Character compos'd of many Characters; his Wit is easie, delicate, natural, but not great or lofty. *Hugo Grotius*, and *Daniel Heinsius*, both *Hollanders*, have writ nobly enough in *Latin Verse*; but the great Learning wherewith they were fraught, hinder'd them from thinking Things in that delicate Manner, which makes the Beauty. For the *French Poets* who have writ in heroick Verse, *Dubartas* and *Ronsard*, had all the Genius their Age was capable of; but the *French Poets* being ignorant, they both affected to appear learned, to distinguish them from the Common; and corrupted their Wit, by an Imitation of the *Greek Poets* ill understood: They

were not skilful enough to place the sublime Manner of the heroick Verse in Things, rather than in Words; nor were so happy to apprehend, that the *French* Tongue is not capable of those compounded Words, which they made after the Example of the *Greek*, and with which they stuffed their Poems; and it was by this indiscreet Affectation to imitate the Ancients, that both became barbarous; but besides, that the Contrivance of the *Fable* of *Ronsard* in his *Franciad* is not natural, the Sort of Verse he took, is not enough majestick for an heroick Poem. I speak not of other Poems whose Authors are living, they have perhaps, their Desert; but Time must make Proof. Now, let us see what Reflections may be made on dramattick Poesie, which *Aristotle* divides into *Tragedy* and *Comedy*.

XVII.

Tragedy, of all Parts of Poesie, is that which *Aristotle* has most discuss'd; and where he appears most exact. He alledges that *Tragedy* is a publick Lecture, without comparison more instructive than *Philosophy*; because it teaches the Mind by the Sense, and rectifies the Passions by the Passions themselves, calming by their emotion, the Troubles they excite in the Heart. The Philosopher had observ'd two important Faults in Man to be regulated, Pride and Hardness of Heart, and he found, for both Vices, a Cure in *Tragedy*. For it makes Man modest, by representing the great *Masters of the Earth humbled*; and it makes him tender and merciful, by shewing him on the Theatre the strange Accidents of Life, and the unforeseen Disgraces to which the most important Persons are

are subject. But because Man is naturally timorous and compassionate, he may fall into another Extreme, to be either too fearful, or too full of Pity; the too much Fear may shake the Constancy of Mind, and the too great Compassion may enfeeble the Equity. 'Tis the Business of *Tragedy* to regulate these two Weaknesses; it prepares and arms him against Disgraces, by shewing them so frequent in the most considerable Persons; and he shall cease to fear ordinary Accidents, when he sees such extraordinary happen to the highest Part of Mankind. But as the End of *Tragedy* is to teach Men not to fear too weakly the common Misfortunes, and manage their Fear; it makes account also to teach them to spare their Compassion, for Objects that deserve it not. For there is Injustice in being mov'd at the Afflictions of those who deserve to be miserable. One may see, without Pity, *Clytemnestra* slain by her Son *Orestes* in *Eschylus*, because she had cut the Throat of *Agamemnon* her Husband; and one cannot see *Hippolytus* die by the Plot of his Step-mother *Phædra* in *Euripides*, without Compassion; because he died not but for being chaste and vertuous: This to me seems, in short, the Design of *Tragedy*, according to the *System* of *Aristotle*, which to me appears admirable, but which has not been explain'd as it ought by his Interpreters; they have not, it may seem, sufficiently understood the Mystery, to unfold it well.

XVIII.

But it is not enough, that Tragedy be furnish'd with all the most moving and terrible Adventures, that History can afford, to stir in the Heart those Motions it pretends, to the End, it may cure the Mind of those vain Fears that may annoy it, and those childish Compassions that may soften it. 'Tis also necessary, says the Philosopher, that every Poet employ these great Objects of Terror and Pity as the two most powerful Springs in Art, to produce that Pleasure, which Tragedy may yield. And this Pleasure which is properly of the Mind, consists in the Agitation of the Soul mov'd by the Passions. *Tragedy* cannot be delightful to the Spectator, unless he become sensible to all that is represented; he must enter into all the different Thoughts of the *Actors*; Interest himself in the Adventures; fear, hope, afflict himself, and rejoyce with them. The Theatre is dull and languid, when it ceases to produce these Motions in the Soul of those that stand by. But as of all Passions Fear and Pity are those that make the strongest Impressions on the Heart of Man, by the natural Disposition he has of being afraid, and of being mollify'd; *Aristotle* has chosen these amongst the rest, to move more powerfully the Soul, by the tender Sentiments they cause, when the Heart admits, and is pierced by them. In effect, when the Soul is shaken, by Motions so natural and so humane, all the Impressions it feels becomes delightful; its Trouble pleases, and the Emotion it finds, is a Kind of Charm to it, which does cast it into a sweet and profound

found Meditation, and which insensibly does engage it in all the Interests that are managed on the Theatre. 'Tis then that the Heart yields it self over to all the Objects that are propos'd, that all Images strike it, that it espouses the Sentiments of all those that speak, and becomes susceptible of all the Passions that are presented, because 'tis mov'd. And in this Agitation consists all the Pleasure that one is capable to receive from Tragedy; for the Spirit of Man does please it self with the different Situations, caus'd by the different Objects, and the various Passions that are represented.

XIX.

It is by this admirable *Spring*, that the *Oedipus* of *Sophocles* (of which *Aristotle* speaks continually, as of the most perfect *Model* of a *Tragedy*) wrought such great *Effects* on the People of *Athens*, when it was represented. The Truth is, all is terrible in that Piece, and all there is moving. See the Subject. The Plague destroying Thebes, Oedipus the King, concerned at the Loss of his Subjects, causes the Oracle to be consulted, for a Remedy. The Oracle ordains him to revenge the *Assassinat* committed on the Person of his Predecessor King *Laius*. Oedipus rages in horrible *Imprecations* against the Author of the Crime, without knowing him; he himself makes a strict Search to discover him; he questions *Creon*, *Tiresias*, *Jocasta*, and a Man of *Corinth* for Intelligence; and it appear'd by the Account that this Prince received, that he himself committed the Murder he would punish. The Mind of the Spectators are in a perpetual Suspense; all the Words of *Tiresias*, *Jocasta*, and the *Corinthian*, as they give Light to the Discovery, cause Terrors

and Surprizes ; and clear it by little and little. *Oedipus* finding it to be himself that was Author of the *Assassinate*, by Evidence of the *Testimonies*, at the same Time understood that *Laius*, whom he had slain, was his Father ; and that *Jocasta*, whom he had married, is his Mother, which he knew not till then ; because he had from his Infancy, been brought up in the Court of the King of *Corinth*. This Discovery is like a Thunder-clap that oblig'd him to abandon himself to all the Despair that his Conscience inspir'd ; he tears out both his Eyes, to punish himself the more cruelly with his own Hands. But this *Criminal* whom all the World abhors before he is known, by a Return of Pity and Tenderneſs, becomes an Object of Compassion to all the Assembly ; now he is bemoan'd, who a Moment before paſs'd for execrable ; and they melt at the Misfortunes of the Person they had in Horror ; and excuse the most abominable of all Crimes, because the Author is an *Innocent unfortunate*, and fell into this Crime, that was foretold him, notwithstanding all the Precautions he had taken to avoid it ; and what is most strange, is, that all the Steps he made to carry him from the Murder, brought him to commit it. Finally, this Flux and Reflux of Indignation, and of Pity, this Revolution of Horror and of Tenderneſs, has such a wonderful Effect on the Minds of the Audience ; all in this Piece moves with an *Air* so delicate and Passionate, all is unravel'd with so much Art, the Suspensions manag'd with so much Probability ; there is made such an universal Emotion of the Soul, by the Surprises, Astonishments, Admirations ; the sole Incident that is form'd in all the Piece,

is so natural, and all tends so in a direct Line to the *Discovery* and *Catastrophe*; that it may not only be said, That never *Subject* has been better devised than this, but that never can be invented a better for *Tragedy*. And thus also it was, that the *Andromeda* of *Euripides* (so much boasted of in *Athenæus*, and an *Episode* whereof *Alexander* sung in the last Banquet of his Life) wrought those wonderful Effects in the City of *Abdera*, when it was acted there by *Archelaus*, under the Reign of *Lysimachus*. The two Parts of *Perseus* and *Andromeda*, the Misfortunes of this Princess expos'd to the Sea-Monster, and all that mov'd *Terror* and *Pity* in this Representation, made so strong and violent Impression on the People, That they departed, saith *Lucian*, from the Theatre, possess'd (as it were) with the Spectacle, and this became a publick Malady, wherewith the Imaginations of the Spectators were seiz'd. Something of a grosser Stroke of this Sort of Impression made by *Tragedy*, has even happen'd in our Days. When *Mondory* acted the *Marianne* of *Tristan*, the People never went away but sad and pensive, making Reflection on what they had seen, and struck with great Pleasure at the same time. These are the two great Springs of the *Greek Tragedy*, and all that is marvellous in *dramatick Poems*, results principally from what there is of *Pity* and *Terror* in the Objects represented.

X X.

Modern Tragedy turns on other Principles; the *Genius* of our (the *French*) Nation is not strong enough to sustain an *Action* on the Theatre, by moving only *Terror* and *Pity*. These are *Machines* that will not play as they ought, but

but by great *Thoughts* and noble *Expressions*, of which we are not indeed altogether so capable as the *Greeks*. Perhaps our *Nation* which is naturally *gallant*, has been oblig'd, by the Necessity of our *Character*, to frame, for our selves, a new *System of Tragedy* to suit with our *Humour*. The *Greeks*, who were popular *Estates*, and who hated *Monarchy*, took delight in their *Spectacles*, to see Kings humbled, and high Fortunes cast down, because the Exaltation griev'd them. The *English*, our *Neighbours*, love Blood in their Sports by the Quality of their Temperament: These are *Islanders*, separated from the rest of Men; we are more *humane*. *Gallantry* moreover agrees with our *Manners*, and our Poets believ'd that they could not succeed well on the *Theatre*, but by sweet and tender *Sentiments*; in which, perhaps, they had some Reason: For, in effect, the Passions represented, become deform'd and insipid, unless they are founded on *Sentiments* conformable to those of the *Spectator*. 'Tis this that obliges our Poets to stand up so strongly for the Privilege of *Gallantry* on the *Theatre*, and to bend all their *Subjects* to Love and *Tenderness*, the rather, to please the Women, who have made themselves Judges of these *Diversifements*, and usurped the Right to pass Sentence. And some besides have suffer'd themselves to be prepossess'd, and led by the *Spaniards*, who make all their *Cavaliers* amorous. 'Tis by them that *Tragedy* began to degenerate; and we by little and little accusom'd to see *Heroes* on the *Theatre*, smitten with another Love than that of *Glory*; and that by degrees all the great Men of Antiquity have lost their Characters in our Hands. 'Tis likewise perhaps by this *Gallantry* that our Age would devise a Colour to excuse the Feebleness of our Wit; not being able to sustain

sustain always the same Action by the Greatness of Words and Thoughts. However it be, for I am not hardy enough to declare my self against the Publick; 'tis to degrade *Tragedy* from that *Majesty* which is proper to it, to mingle in it *Love*, which is of a Character always light, and little suitable to that Gravity of which *Tragedy* makes Profession. Hence it proceeds that these *Tragedies* mixed with *Gallantries*, never make such admirable Impressions on the Spirit, as did those of *Sophocles* and *Euripides*; for all the Bowels were moved by the great Objects of *Terror* and *Pity* which they proposed. 'Tis likewise for this, that the Reputation of our *modern Tragedies* so soon decays, and they yield but small Delight at two Years End; whereas the *Greek* please yet to those that have a good Taste, after two thousand Years; because what is not grave and serious on the Theatre, though it give Delight at present, after a short Time grows distasteful and unpleasant; and because, what is not proper for great Thoughts and great Figures in *Tragedy* cannot support it self. The *Ancients* who perceived this, did not interweave their *Gallantry* and *Love*, save in *Comedy*. For *Love* is of a Character that always degenerates from that *heroick Air*, of which *Tragedy* must never divest it self. And nothing to me shews so mean and senseless, as for one to amuse himself with *whining* about frivolous *Kindnesses*, when he may be admirable by great and noble Thoughts, and sublime Expressions. But I dare not presume so far on my own Capacity and Credit, to oppose my self of my own Head against a Usage so established. I must be content modestly to propose my Doubts, and that may serve to exercise the *Wits* in an Age that only wants

wants *Matter*. But to end this *Reflection* with a Touch of *Christianism*, I am perswaded, that the Innocence of the Theatre might be better preserv'd, according to the *Idea* of the *ancient Tragedy*, because the *new* is become too effeminate by the Softness of latter Ages; and the Prince de Conty, who signaliz'd his Zeal against the *modern Tragedy*, by his Treatise on that Subject, would, without doubt, have allowed the *Ancient*, because that has nothing that may seem dangerous.

XXI.

The other Faults of *modern Tragedy*, are ordinarily that either the *Subjects* which are chosen are mean and frivolous; or the *Fable* is not well wrought, and the *Contrivance* not regular; or that they are too much crouded with *Episodes*; or that the *Characters* are not preserv'd and sustain'd; or that the *Incidents* are not well prepar'd; or that the *Machines* are forced; or that, what is *admirable*, fails in the *Probability*, or the *Probability* is too plain and flat; or that the *Surprizes* are ill manag'd, the *Knots* ill tied, the loosing them not natural, the *Catastrophe's* precipitated, the *Thoughts* without *Elevation*, the *Expressions* without *Majesty*, the *Figures* without *Grace*, the *Passions* without *Colour*, the *Discourse* without *Life*, the *Narrations* cold, the *Words* low, the *Language* improper, and all the *Beauties* false. They speak not enough to the Heart of the *Audience*, which is the only *Art* of the Theatre, where nothing can be delightful but that which moves the *Affections*, and which makes *Impression* on the *Soul*; little known is that *Rhetorick* which can lay open the *Passions* by all the natural

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Degrees of their Birth, and of their Progress; nor are those Morals at all in Use, which are proper to mingle these different *Interests*, those opposite *Glances*, those clashing *Maxims*, those *Reasons* that destroy each other, to ground the *Incertitudes* and *Irresolutions*, and to animate the Theatre. For the Theatre being essentially destined for *Action*, nothing ought to be idle, but all in Agitation, by the Thwarting of Passions that are founded on the different *Interests* that arise; or by the Embroilment that follows from the *Intrigue*. Likewise there ought to appear no *Actor*, that carries not some Design in his Head, either to cross the Designs of others, or to support his own; all ought to be in Trouble, and no Calm to appear, till the *Action* be ended by the *Catastrophe*. Nor finally, is it well understood that it is not the *admirable Intrigue*, the surprising and wonderful *Events*, the extraordinary *Incidents* that make the *Beauty* of a *Tragedy*; it is the *Discourses* when they are natural and passionate. *Sophocles* was not more successful than *Euripides* on the Theatre at *Athens*, but by the *Discourse*; though the *Tragedies* of *Euripides* have more of *Action*, of *Morality*, of wonderful *Incidents*, than those of *Sophocles*. It is by these Faults, more or less great, that *Tragedy* in these Days has so little Effect on the Mind; that we no longer feel those agreeable *Trances* that make the Pleasure of the Soul, nor find those *Suspensions*, those *Ravishments*, those *Surprises*, those *Admirations*, that the ancient *Tragedy* caus'd, because the *Modern* have nothing of those astonishing and terrible *Objects* that affrighted, whilst they pleas'd the *Spectators*, and made those great *Impressions* on the Soul, by the Ministry of the Passions. In these Days Men go from

from the Theatre as little mov'd as when they went in, and carry their *Heart* along with them, untouch'd as they brought it; so that the Pleasure they received there, is become as superficial as that of *Comedy*, and our grave *Tragedies* are (to speak properly) no more but heighten'd *Comedy*.

XXII.

It is not but the *Ancients* had likewise their Faults. *Æschylus* had scarce any Principle for *Manners*, and for the *Decencies*; his *Fables* are too simple, the *Contrivance* wretched, the *Expression* obscure and blunder'd; scarce ought can be understood of his Tragedy of *Agamemnon*. But because he believ'd that the Secret of the Theatre is to speak pompously, he bestow'd all his Art on the *Words* without any regard to the *Thoughts*. *Quintilian* says, That he is *Sublime* and *Lofly* to *Extravagance*: In effect, he never speaks in cold Blood, and says the most indifferent Things in a tragick *Huff*; likewise in the *Images* that he draws, the *Colours* are too glaring, and the *Strokes* too gross. He, who writes his Life, relates that in one of the *Chorus's* of his Tragedy of the *Eumenides*, he so horribly frighted the *Audience*, that the *Spectacle* made the *Children* swoon, and the *Women* with Child suffer *Abortion*. Finally, his *Enthusiasm*, it seems, never left him, he is so exalted, and so little natural. *Sophocles* is too elaborate in his *Discourse*, his *Art* is not enough hidden in some of his Pieces, it lies too open and near the Day; he sometimes becomes *Obscure*, by his too great *Affectation* to be *Sublime*; and the *Nobleness* of his *Expression* is injurious to the *Perspicuity*; his *Plots* are not all so happily

unravell'd, as that of the *Oedipus*. The *Discovery* in the *Ajax* Answers not to the *Intrigue*; the Author ought not to have ended a *Spectacle* of that Terror and Pity, with a dull and frivolous Contest about the *Sepulture* of *Ajax*, who then had slain himself. And in the same Piece that *Machine* of *Minerva* is too violent, who casts an *Enchantment* over the Eyes of *Ajax*, to save *Ulysses*, whom *Ajax* would have kill'd if he had known him. *Oedipus* ought not to have been ignorant of the *Assassinat* of the King of *Thebes*; the *Ignorance* he is in of the *Murder*, which makes all the *Beauty* of the *Intrigue*, is not probable. *Euripides* is not exact in the Contrivance of his *Fables*; his *Characters* want *Variety*, he falls often into the same *Thoughts* on the same *Adventures*; he is not enough a religious *Observer* of *Decencies*; and by a too great *Affectation* to be *Moral* and *Sententious*, he is not so *Ardent* and *Passionate* as he ought to be; for this Reason he goes not to the *Heart*, so much as *Sophocles*; there are *Precipitations* in the Preparation of his *Incidents*, as in the *Suppliants*, where *Theseus* levies an *Army*, marches from *Athens* to *Thebes*, and returns on the same *Day*. The *Discoveries* of his *Plots* are nothing natural, these are perpetual *Machines*; *Diana* makes the *Discovery* in the *Tragedy* of *Hippolytus*; *Minerva* that of the *Iphigenia* in *Taurica*; *Thetis* that of *Andromache*; *Castor* and *Polux* that of *Helena*, and that of *Electra*; and so of others. After all, as these three Authors are the first *Models* of *Tragedy*, they are great in their *Designs*, judicious in their *Fables*, passionate in their *Expressions*; throughout in their *Works* predominates a *Genius*, *Nature*, and good *Sense*. And though they are guilty of their *Faults*, yet it may be said, That all which is of them is

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Original. The latter *Greeks*, whereof *Ephesius* speaks, as *Lycophron*, *Sositheus*, and the others that flourish'd under King *Ptolemy Philadelphus*; and the first *Latins*, as *Livius Andronicus*, *Accius Pacuvius*, who apply'd themselves to *Tragedy*, had not any Success in that Way. The *Romans*, for some Time, took Delight in *Comedy*. But so soon as the *polite Learning* was a little establish'd at *Rome*, most Part of the great *Men* employ'd themselves in writing *Tragedies*. *Ca-tullus* made one *Tragedy* of *Alcmeon*, out of which *Cicero* cites some Verses in his *Lucullus*; *Gracchus* made *Thyestes*, whereof *Censorinus* makes mention; *Caesar* made *Adrastus*, whereof *Festus* speaks; *Rutillius* made *Astyanax*, of which *Ful-gentius* speaks; *Mecænas* made *Octavia*, which *Priscian* mentions; *Ovid* made *Medea*, of which *Quintilian* gives some Account; and seeing that these *Tragedies* are lost, no Judgment can be made of them, but by the Merit of their Au-thors. But the Esteem these great *Men* had for this Sort of Poem then in a Time when good Sense so much sway'd, may sufficiently ju-stify Cardinal *Richelieu*, who was so infinitely affected with it; and he little authorizes the Ignorance at Court in these Things, which is so much the Mode at this Day. The only *Trage-dies* that remain of the *Latins*, are those of *Seneca*, who speaks always well, but never speaks naturally; his Verse are pompous, his Thoughts lofty, because he would dazzle; but the Contrivance of his *Fables* are of no great Character. This Author pleases himself too much in giving his *Idea's*, instead of *real Ob-jects*; and he represents not always very regu-larly, what is to be represented. But it is not only in the Composition of *Tragedy* that the *Greeks* have excelled the *Romans*; it is also in the

the *Magnificence* of the Theatre, these People, however conquer'd they have been, have had greater *Thoughts* than their *Conquerors*; and *Plutarch* assures us, That the *Athenians* have been at greater *Expences* in the *Representation* of their *Tragedies*, and in the *Rewards* they propos'd to those Poets that succeeded well, than in all the *Wars* that ever they undertook for the *Defence* of their *Republick*; and they believ'd not this *Expence* unprofitable, since it was to inspire the People with *Thoughts* conformable to the Good of their *Estates*.

XXIII.

The following Ages became successively so gross one after another, that they could produce nothing in this Kind of *Poesie* worthy of any *Reflection*. The *Italians* and *Spaniards* of latter Ages, had their *Wit* too much corrupted with *Romances*, to sustain the *Greatness* of the *Character* of *Tragedy*: Notwithstanding *Trissino* would make his *Sophonisba*, and *Tasso* his *Torismondo*, after the Pattern of the *Tragedies* of *Sophocles*; but they could not reach that *Character*. The *Jephthes*, and *Baptistes* of *Buchanan*, contain little considerable, except the Purity of *Stile* in which these *Tragedies* are written. The *Sedecias* of *Malapertus*, the *Crispus* of *Stephonius*, the *Josephus* of *Grotius*, the *Herod* of *Heinsius*, and the other *Tragedies* of the learned Men of the last Age, have almost all of them a *Contrivance* too simple; the *Incidents* are cold, the *Narrations* tedious, the *Passions* forc'd, the *Stile* constrain'd. The *Tragedies* of *Garnier*, *Rotrou*, *Serre*, and others of that Time, are yet of a far meaner *Character*. The *English* have more of *Genius* for *Tragedy* than other People, as well

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by the Spirit of their Nation which delights in Cruelty, as also by the Character of their Language which is proper for great Expressions. But the *French*, who have apply'd themselves to *Tragedy* more than any others, have likewise writ with more Success; and this Success does strongly authorize the Use, as may be seen by so many great Men amongst us, who daily signalize themselves on the Theatre. But the Whimsy of these Opera's of Musick, wherewith the Publick are infatuated, will, perhaps, be capable to discourage them, if they be regarded. It remains to speak of *Comedy*, that, of a *Lecture of Vertue* which it is essentially, is become, by the Licentiousness of these latter Times, a *School of Debauchery*; 'tis only to re-establish it in its natural Estate, as it ought to be, according to *Aristotle*, that I pretend to speak. The rest I leave to the Zeal of the Preachers, who are a little slack on this Subject.

XXIV.

Some pretend that *Aristotle*, who has scarce said any Thing of *Comedy*, has said all, making a Remark, that the *Ridiculous* is to be handled in the same Manner as he has discoursed of the *Grave* and *Serious*, by the Rule of Proportion, that must be observ'd betwixt *Comedy* and *Tragedy*. That is to say, there must be observ'd in the *Comedy*, as well as in *Tragedy*, the Decencies of Places, of Times, of Persons; that there must be employ'd all the Colours, which ought to be the Seeds and the Principles of the Decency; that the Preparations of the Incidents ought to be conducted in such Sort, that they serve not to render the Events cold, by taking from them what they may have of Advantage

vantage and Grace, by the Surprise: For it is of importance to consider, that to prepare an *Incident* well, is not altogether to say Things that may discover; but it is to say so much only as may give Place to the *Audience* to Divine; which also ought to be sparingly done. For the Pleasure of the Spectators is to expect always something that may *surprise*, and that is contrary to their *Prejudgments*. And nothing ought to be predominant on the Theatre so much as the *Suspension*, because the chief Delight to be receiv'd there, is the *Surprise*.

X X V.

Comedy is an Image of *common Life*; its End is to shew, on the Stage, the Faults of Particulars, in order to amend the Faults of the Publick, and to correct the People through a Fear of being render'd ridiculous. So that which is most proper to excite Laughter, is that which is most essential to *Comedy*. One may be ridiculous in *Words*, or ridiculous in *Things*: There is an honest Laughter, and a buffoon Laughter. 'Tis merely a Gift of Nature to make every Thing ridiculous. For all the Actions of human Life have their *fair* and *wrong* Side, their *serious* and *ridiculous*. But *Aristotle*, who gives Precepts to make Men weep, leaves none to make them laugh. This proceeds purely from the *Genius*; Art and Method have little to do with it; 'tis the Work of Nature alone. The *Spaniards* have a *Genius* to discern the *Ridiculous* of Things much better than the *French*; and the *Italians*, who are naturally *Comedians*, express it better; their Tongue is more proper for it, by a drolling *Tone* peculiar to them. The *French* may be capable of it,

when their Language has attain'd its Perfection. Finally, that pleasant Turn, that *Gaiety* which can sustain the Delicacy of his Character, without falling into *Coldness*, nor into *Buffoonry*; that *fine Raillery*, which is the *Flower of Wit*, is the Talent which *Comedy* demands; but it must always be observ'd, that the true *Ridiculous* of Art, for the Entertainment on the *Theatre*, ought to be no other but the Copy of the *Ridiculous* that is found in Nature. *Comedy* is as it should be, when the Spectator believes himself really in the Company of such Persons as he has represented, and takes himself to be in a Family whilst he is at the *Theatre*; and that he there sees nothing but what he sees in the *World*. For *Comedy* is worth nothing at all, unless he know, and can compare the *Manners* that are exhibited on the Stage, with those of such Persons as he has Conversation withal. 'Twas by this that *Menander* had so great Success amongst the *Grecians*; and the *Romans* thought themselves in *Conversation*, whilst they sat beholding the *Comedies* of *Terence*; for they perceiv'd nothing but what they had been accusom'd to find in ordinary Companies. 'Tis the great Art of *Comedy*, to keep close to Nature, and never leave it; to have common Thoughts and Expressions fitted to the Capacity of all the *World*. For it is most certainly true, That the most gross Strokes of *Nature*, whatever they be, please always more than the most delicate, that are not *natural*; nevertheless base and vulgar Terms are not to be permitted on the *Theatre*, unless supported by some Kind of *Wit*. The *Proverbs* and *wise Sayings* of the People ought not to be suffer'd, unless they have some pleasant Meaning, and unless they are natural. This is the most general Principle

ple of *Comedy*; by which, whatever is represented, cannot fail to please; but without it, nothing. 'Tis only by adhering to Nature, that the *Probability* can be maintain'd, which is the Sole infallible Guide that may be followed on the *Theatre*. Without *Probability* all is lame and faulty, with it all goes well: None can run astray who follow it; and the most ordinary Faults of *Comedy* happen from thence, that the *Decencies* are not well observ'd, nor the *Incidents* enough prepar'd. 'Tis likewise necessary to take heed that the *Colours* employ'd to prepare the *Incidents*, be not too gross, to leave to the Spectator the Pleasure of finding out himself what they signify. But the most ordinary Weakness of our *Comedies* is the unravelling; scarce ever any succeed well in that, by the Difficulty there is in untying happily that Knot which had been tied. It is easie to wind up an Intrigue, 'tis only the Work of Fancy; but the unravelling is the pure and perfect Work of the Judgment. 'Tis this that makes the Success difficult, and if one would thereon make a little Reflection, he might find that the most universal Fault of *Comedy*, is, that the *Catastrophe* of it is not *natural*. It rests to examine, Whether in *Comedy* the Images may be drawn greater than the *Natural*, the more to move the Minds of the *Spectators* by more shining Portraits, and by stronger Impressions? That is to say, Whether a Poet may make a *Miser* more covetous, a *morose Man* more morose and troublesome than the Original? To which I answer, That *Plautus*, who studied to please the *common People*, made them so; but *Terence*, who would please the *better Sort*, confin'd himself within the Bounds of Nature, and he represented Vices without making them

either better or worse. Notwithstanding these *extravagant Characters*, such as the *Citizen turn'd Gentleman*, and the *Sick in Imagination of Moliere*, fail'd not of *Success* a little while ago at Court, where all the *Tastes* are so delicate; but all Things there are well receiv'd, even to the *Divertisements* of the *Provinces*, if they have any *Air of Plaisanterie*; for there they love to *laugh* rather than to *admire*. These are the most important *Rules of Comedy*. Now see those who have been famous for this Kind of Writing.

XXVI.

The Principal amongst the *Greeks*, are *Aristophanes* and *Menander*; the Chief amongst the *Latins*, are *Plautus* and *Terence*. *Aristophanes* is not exact in the Contrivance of his Fables; his Fictions are not very probable; he mocks Persons too grossly, and too openly. *Socrates*, whom he Plays upon so eagerly in his *Comedies*, had a more delicate *Air of Raillery* than he; but was not so *Shameless*. It is true, *Aristophanes* writ during the Disorder and Licentiousness of the old Comedy, and that he understood the Humour of the *Athenian* People, who were easily disgusted with the Merit of extraordinary Persons, whom he set his Wit to abuse, that he might please that People. After all, he often is no otherwise pleasant than by his Buffoonry. That *Ragoust* compos'd of seventy six Syllables in the last Scene of his Comedy the *Ecclesiastusai*, would not go down with us in our Age. His Language is often obscure, blunder'd, low, trivial, and his frequent Jingling upon Words, his Contradictions of opposite Terms each to other; the
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Hotchpotch of his *Stile*, of *Tragick* and *Comick*, of *Serious* and *Buffoon*, of *Grave* and *Familiar*, is ugly; and his *Witticisms*, often, when near examin'd, prove false. *Menander* is pleasant in a more commendable Manner; his *Stile* is pure, neat, shining, natural; he perswades like an *Orator*, and instructs like a *Philosopher*. And if one may ground a true Judgment on the Fragments that remain of this Author, one may find that he made very pleasant Images of the *civil Life*; that he makes Men speak according to their Character; that one may find himself in the Portraits he made of Manners, because he keeps close to Nature, and enters into the Thoughts of the Persons he makes to speak. Finally, *Plutarch*, in the Comparison he has made of these two Authors, says, That the *Muse* of *Aristophanes* is like an impudent, and that of *Menander* resembles a virtuous Woman. For the two *Latin comick Poets*, *Plautus* is ingenious in his Designs, happy in his Imaginations, fruitful in his Inventions; yet there are some insipid Jests that escape from him in the Taste of *Horace*; and his good Sayings that make the People laugh, make sometimes the honestest Sort to pity him: 'tis true, he says the best Things in the World, and yet very often he says the most wretched; this a Man is subject to, when he endeavours to be too witty; he will make laughter by extravagant Expressions and Hyperboles, when he cannot be successful to make it by Things. *Plautus* is not altogether so regular in the Contrivance of his Pieces, nor in the Distribution of the Acts; but he is more simple in his Subjects: for the *Fables* of *Terence* are ordinarily compounded, as is seen in the *Andria* which contains two Loves. This is what was objected

to *Terence*, that he made one *Latin Comedy* of two *Greek*, the more to animate his *Theatre*. But then the *Plots* are more naturally unravelled than those of *Plautus*; as those of *Plautus* are more natural than those of *Aristophanes*. And though *Cæsar* call *Terence* a diminutive *Menander*, because he only had the Sweetness and the Smoothness, but had not the Force and Vigour; yet he has writ in a *Manner* so natural, and so judicious, that of a *Copy*, as he was, he is become an *Original*; for never Man had so clear an Insight into Nature. I shall speak nothing of *Lucilius*, of whom nothing now is left but *Fragments*. All we know of him, is what *Varro* relates, that he was happy in the Subjects that he chose; but never Person had a better *Genius* for *Comedy*, than the Spaniard *Lope de Vega*; he had copious Wit join'd with great Advantages of Nature, and an admirable Facility; for he has compos'd more than Three hundred *Comedies*; his Name alone gave Applause to his Pieces, so strongly was his Reputation establish'd; and it was sufficient that a Work came from his Hands, to Merit the publick *Approbation*. But he had a Wit too vast to be confin'd to Rules, or admit of any Bounds; 'twas this oblig'd him to abandon himself to the Swing of his *Genius*, because he might always rely on it. He never consulted other Commentary, but the Gust of his *Auditors*, and govern'd himself by the Success of his Pieces, rather than by Reason. Thus he disengag'd himself of all the Scruples of *Unity*, and the Superstitions of *Probability*. But as most commonly he is for refining upon the *Ridiculous*, and would be too witty, his Fancies are often more *Fortunate* than they are *Just*, and have more of the *Droll*, than they have of what

what is *natural*; for by too much Subtlety in his *Drollery*, his Wit becomes false, by reason 'tis forc'd to be too delicate; and his Graces become cold, by being *too fine*. But amongst the *French*, never any carried *Comedy* so high as *Moliere*. For the ancient *comick* Poets had only the Folk of the Family to make Mirth with on the Theatre; but *Moliere's* Fools in the Play, are the *Marquises*, and the Persons of Quality; others have been content to play upon the Common and Country Conversation in their *Comedies*; *Moliere* has made bold with all *Paris*, and the Court. He is the only Man amongst them who has discover'd those Lines of Nature that distinguish and make her known. The Beauties of the Portraits he draws are so natural, that they make themselves perceiv'd by the grossest Apprehensions: and his Talent of being pleasant, is improv'd one half the more by that he has of Counterfeiting to the Life. His *Misanthrope*, in my Opinion, is the most compleat Character, and withal, the most singular that ever appear'd on the Theatre. But the Contrivance of his *Comedies* is always defective in something, and his Plots are never handsomely unravel'd. This is what may be said in general of Comedy.

XXVII.

The *Eclogue* is the most considerable of the little Poems; it is an Image of the Life of *Shepherds*. Therefore the Matter is low, and nothing great is in the Genius of it; its Business is to describe the *Loves*, the *Sports*, the *Piques*, the *Jealousies*, the *Disputes*, the *Quarrels*, the *Intrigues*, the *Passions*, the *Adventures*, and all the little *Affairs of Shepherd's*. So that its

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Character must be simple; the Wit easie, the Expression common; it must have nothing that is exquisite, neither in the Thoughts, nor in the Words, nor in any Fashions of Speech; in which the *Italians*, who have writ in this Kind of Verse, have been mistaken: For they always aim at being witty, and to say Things too finely. The true Character of the *Eclogue* is Simplicity, and Modesty: Its Figures are sweet, the Passions tender, the Motions easie; and tho' sometimes it may be *Passionate*, and have little Transports, and little Despairs, yet it never rises so high as to be fierce or violent; its Narrations are short, Descriptions little, the Thoughts ingenious, the Manners innocent, the Language pure, the Verse flowing, the Expressions plain, and all the Discourse natural; for this is not a great Talker that loves to make a Noise. The Models to be proposed to write well in this Sort of Poësie, are *Theocritus* and *Virgil*. *Theocritus* is more sweet, more natural, more delicate, by the Character of the *Greek* Tongue. *Virgil* is more judicious, more exact, more regular, more modest, by the Character of his own Wit, and by the Genius of the *Latin* Tongue. *Theocritus* hath more of all the Graces that make the ordinary Beauty of Poetry; *Virgil* has more of good Sense, more Vigor, more Nobleness, more Modesty. After all, *Theocritus* is the Original, *Virgil* is only the Copy: though some Things he hath copied so happily, that they equal the Original in many Places. *Moschus* and *Bion*, who writ in this Sort of Verse, have likewise great Excellencies, and very great Delicacies in their *Idyllia*. The other Poets, who have writ *Eclogues*, as *Nemesianus*, who was an *African*, and *Calphurnius*, the *Sicilian*, writ very meanly.

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The *Italians*, as *Bonarelli*, *Guarini*, *Cavalier Marino*; the *Spaniards*, as *Luis de Gongora*, *Camoens*, have little of *natural* in their *Pastorals*, their *Idyllia*, and their *Eclogues*; and *Ronsard*, amongst the *French*, hath nothing tender or delicate. The *French* Tongue, however perfect it pretends to be, hath produc'd nothing in this Kind of Verse, comparable to the *Eclogues* of *Virgil*; neither yet, it seems, has it Force enough to express Things so naturally to the Life, and to sustain that great *Simplicity* of the *bucolique* Verse, so nobly as the *Greek* and *Latin* Tongue; for the *Greek* and *Latin* have a certain Character of Majesty that shines even in the smallest Things. The Idea of *Pastoral Comedies*, for which the *Italians* have had so great liking, is taken from the *Cyclops* of *Euripides*. The *Greeks*, saith *Horace*, began to bring *Satyrs* on the Theatre, to temper the *Austerity* of their Tragedy,

XXVIII.

The principal End of *Satyr*, is to instruct the People, by discrediting Vice. It may therefore be of great Advantage in a Stage, when taught to keep within its Bounds. But as Flatterers embroil themselves with the Publick, whilst they strive too much to please Particulars; so it happens, that the Writers of *Satyr* disoblige sometimes Particulars, whilst they endeavour too much to please the Publick: And as downright Praises are too gross, *Satyr* that takes off the Mask, and reprehends Vice too openly, is not very delicate; but though it be more difficult to praise, than to blame, because it is easier to discover in People what may be turn'd into ridiculous, than

than to understand their Merit ; 'tis requisite notwithstanding equally to have a Wit for the one, as for the other. For the same Delicacy of Wit, that is necessary to him who praiseth, to purge his Praises from what is deform'd, is necessary to him who blameth, to clear the *Satyr* from what is Bitter in it. and this Delicacy which properly gives the Relish to *Satyr*, was heretofore the *Character* of *Horace* ; for it was only by the Way of Jest And Merriment that he exercis'd his Censure. For he knew full well, that the Sporting of Wit, hath more Effect than the strongest Reasons, and the most *sententious Discourse*, to render Vice ridiculous. In which *Juvenal*, with all his Seriousness, has so much ado to succeed. For indeed that violent Manner of Declamation which throughout he makes use of, has, most commonly, but very little Effect ; he scarce perswades at all, because he is always in Choler, and never speaks in cold Blood. 'Tis true, he has some common Places of *Morality*, that may serve to dazzle the weaker Sort of Apprehensions. But with all his strong Expressions, *energetick* Terms, and great Flashes of *Eloquence*, he makes little Impression ; because he has nothing that is delicate, or that is natural. It is not a true Zeal that makes him talk against the *Misdemeanors* of his Age, 'tis a Spirit of Vanity and Ostentation. *Persius*, who to the Gravity and Vehemence of *Juvenal* had join'd Obscurity, caus'd by the *Affectation* he had to appear *learned*, has no better Success ; because he yields no Delight : Not but that he has, however, some Touches of an hidden Delicacy ; but these Strokes are always wrap'd up in such a profound Learning, that there needs a *Comment* to unfold them ;

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he speaks not but with Sadness, what by *Horace* is said with the greatest Mirth imaginable, whom sometimes he would imitate; his *Moroseness* scarce ever leaves him; he speaks not of the least Things but in a Heat; and he never Sports, but after the most serious Manner in the World. The *Satyr* which *Seneca* made on the *Apotheosis* of the Emperor *Claudius*, is of a much different Character, 'tis one of the most delicate Pieces of Antiquity: and the Author, who otherwise throughout sustains the Gravity of a *Philosopher* by the cold Blood of his *Temperament*, and by all the *Grimaces* and *Severity* of his *Morals*, seems so much the more pleasant in this, as he is more grave and more serious in all his other Works. Most part of the *Dialogues* of *Lucian*, are *Satyrs* of this Kind; the Author is a pleasant *Buffoon*, who makes Sport with the most serious Matters, and insolently plays upon whatever is great in the World. He is on all Occasions infinitely witty; but this, I confess, is a Kind of foolish Character. We have two modern *Satyrs* writ in Prose, much-what of the same Air, which surpass all that has been writ of this Kind in these latter Ages. The first is *Spanish*, compos'd by *Cervantes*, Secretary to the Duke of *Alva*. This great Man having been slighted, and received some Disgrace by the Duke of *Lerma*, chief Minister of State to *Philip III*, who had no respect for Men of Learning, writ the *Romance* of *Don Quixot*, which is a most fine and ingenious *Satyr* of his own Country; because the Nobility of *Spain*, whom he renders ridiculous by this Work, were all bit in the Head, and intoxicated with Knight-errantry. This is a Tradition I have from one of my Friends, who learn'd this Secret from

from *Don Lope*, whom *Cervantes* had made the Confident of his Resentment. The other *Satyr* is *French*, made in the Time of the League, where the Author very pleasantly teaches the Publick the Intentions of the House of *Guise* for Religion: Throughout this Work is spread a *Delicacy* of Wit, that fails not to shine amongst the rude and grosser Ways of Expressions of those Times: And the little Verses scattered here and there in the Work, are of a Character that is most fine, and most natural. The *Satyr* of *Rabelais*, however witty it be, nevertheless is stuff'd with so much *Ribaldry*, and is so little conformable to the Refinedness of this present Age we live in, that I think it not worthy to be read by Gentlemen, no more than the *Satyr*s of *Regnier*, though he has Wit enough; for he is too Impudent, and observes no Decency.

XXIX.

The *Elegy*, by the Quality of its Name, is destined to Tears and Complaints: And therefore ought to be of a doleful Character. But afterwards it has been us'd in Subjects of Tenderness, as in *Love-matters*, and the like. The *Latins* have been more successful therein (by what appears to us) than the *Greeks*. For little remains to us of *Philetas* and *Tyrtaeus*, who were famous in *Greece* for this Kind of Verse. They who have writ *Elegy* best amongst the *Latins*, are *Tibullus*, *Propertius*, and *Ovid*. *Tibullus* is elegant and polite, *Propertius* noble and high; but *Ovid* is to be preferr'd to both; because he is more natural, more moving, and more passionate; and thereby he has better express'd the Character of *Elegy* than the others.

others. Some *Elegies* are left us of *Catullus*, of *Mecenas*, and *Cornelius Gallus*, which are of a great Purity, and are exceedingly delicate; but the Verse of *Catullus* and *Mecenas* have too much Softness, and a Negligence too affected: Those of *Cornelius Gallus*, are more round, and support themselves better. In these latter Ages have appear'd a German named *Lotichius*, an Italian called *Molsa*, a Fleming call'd *Sidronius*, who have writ *Elegies*, with great Elegancy. I speak not of the French *Elegy*, it is a Kind of Verse which they distinguish not from heroick; and they call indifferently *Elegy*, what they please, whereby the Distinction of the true Character of this Verse seems not yet well established amongst them.

XXX.

The *Ode* ought to have as much Nobleness, Elevation, and Transport, as the *Eclogue* has of Simplicity and Modesty. 'Tis not only the Wit that heightens it, but likewise the Matter. For as its Use is to sing the Praises of the Gods, and to celebrate the illustrious Actions of great Men, so it requires to sustain all the Majesty of its Character, an exalted Nature, a great Wit, a daring Fancy, an Expression noble and sparkling, yet pure and correct. All the Briskness and Life, which Art has by its Figures, is not sufficient to heighten *Ode* so far as its Character requires. But the reading alone of *Pindar*, is more capable to inspire this Genius than all my Reflections. He is great in his Designs, vast in his Thoughts, bold in his Imaginations, happy in his Expressions, eloquent in his Discourse: but his great Vivacity

city hurries him sometimes past his Judgment; he gives himself too much Swing; his *Panegyrics* are perpetual Digressions, where rambling from his Subject, he carries the Readers from Fables to Fables, from Allusions to Allusions, from Chimera's to Chimera's; for 'tis the most unbridled and irregular Fancy in the World. But this Irregularity is one Part of the Character of the *Ode*, the Nature and Genius of it requiring Transport. *Pindar* likewise is the only Person amongst the *Greeks*, that acquired Glory by this Sort of Writing, for little is remaining of the other nine *Lyrick* Poets, whereof *Petronius* speaks. Nevertheless it may be avowed by that which is left us of the Fragments of *Sappho*, that *Demetrius* and *Longinus* have great Reason to boast so highly in their Works of the admirable *Genius* of this Woman; for there are found some Strokes of Delicacy the most fine, and the most passionate in the World. None can judge, with any Certainty, of the others, of whom we have so little. *Anacreon* alone is capable to comfort us for the Loss of their Works. For his *Odes* are *Flowers*, *Beauties*, and *Graces* perpetual: It is so familiar to him to write what is Natural, and to the Life; and he has an Air so delicate, so easie, and so graceful; that there is nothing comparable in all Antiquity in the Way he took, and in that Kind of Writing he followed. *Horace* found the Art to join all the Force and high Flights of *Pindar*, to all the Sweetness and Delicacy of *Anacreon*, to make himself a new Character by uniting the Perfections of the other two. For besides that he had a Wit naturally pleasant, it was also great, solid, and sublime; he had Noble-

Nobleness in his Conceits, and Delicacy in his Thoughts and Sentiments: The Parts of his *Odes* that he was willing to finish, are always Master-pieces; but it requires a very clear Apprehension to discern all his Wit: for there are many secret Graces, and hidden Beauties in his Verse, that very few can discover: He also is the only *Latin* Author who writ well in that Verse, amongst the Ancients; and none could ever follow him, his *Genius* went so high. *Boetius* made some little *Odes*, which he scatter'd in his Work of the *Consolation of Philosophy*. But for all the Politeness of his Wit, he could not surmount the bad Air that was then predominant; and what is most elegant in him, is only a false Beauty, suitable to the *Genius* of the Age in which he writ. Amongst the *Latin* Lyrics of latter Times, I find three, that distinguish themselves from the Rest, *Casimire Sarbieuski*, a Pole, *Dunkan de Serifantes* and *Magdalenet*, both *French*. *Sarbieuski* is lofty, but not pure; *Magdalenet* is pure, but not lofty; *Serifantes*, in his *Odes*, has joyn'd both; for he writes Nobly, and in a Stile sufficiently Pure; but he has not so much Flame as *Casimire*, who had a great deal of Wit; and of that happy Wit, which makes Poets. *Buchanan* has *Odes* comparable to those of Antiquity; but he hath great Unevennesses by the Mixture of his Character, which is not uniform enough. *Muret* and *Vida* have a Fancy too limited; and their *Idea* seems constrain'd, whilst too scrupulously they are addicted to *Latinity*. *Chiabrera* has had great Reputation by his *Odes* amongst the *Italians*; and *Ronsard* amongst *French*, for *Ronsard* is noble and great; but this Greatness becomes deform'd and odious, by his Affectation to appear learn'd; for he dis-

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plays his *Scholarship* even to his Mistress. *Malherb* is exact and correct; but he ventures nothing; and affecting to be too discreet, is often cold. *Theophile* has a great Fancy and little Sense. He has some fortunate Boldnesses, because he permits himself all. *Voiture* and *Sarasin* have gay Things in their *Odes*; for they have the Art of Drolling pleasantly on mean Subjects, and they sustain this Character well enough, but they have not Vigour and Sublimity for high Matters. Most Part of the others who have writ after them in *Lyrick Verse*, of which have been made so many Collections, have pitch'd upon a false Delicacy of Expression, which carries them afar off from the true Character of the *Ode*, which is the Greatness and Majesty of Discourse; and they flag in a shameful *Mediocrity*; their Verses were flat, and had nothing of that Heat, and that noble Air, so essential to the *Ode*, which ought to say nothing low or common. I might speak with more Advantage of those who write at this present, if I had not impos'd a Law on myself, not to intermeddle, in giving Judgment of the Living, which would be too much Confidence in me, besides the Indiscretion.

XXXI.

The *Epigram* of all the Works in Verse that Antiquity has produc'd, is the least considerable; yet this too has its Beauty. This Beauty consists either in the delicate Turn, or in a lucky Word. The *Greeks* have understood this Sort of *Poesie* otherwise than the *Latins*. The *Greek Epigram* runs upon the Turn of a Thought that is natural, but fine and subtile. The *Latin Epigram*, by a false Taste that sway'd in the

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Beginning of the Decay of the pure *Latinity*, endeavours to surprize the Mind by some nipping Word, which is call'd a *Point*. *Catullus* writ after the former Manner, which is of a finer Character; for he endeavours to close a natural Thought, within a delicate Turn of Words, and within the Simplicity of a very soft Expression. *Martial* was in some Manner the Author of this other Way; that is to say, to terminate an ordinary Thought by some Word that is surprizing. After all, Men of a good Taste, prefer'd the Way of *Catullus*, before that of *Martial*; there being more of true Delicacy in that, than in this. And in these latter Ages we have seen a noble *Venetian* named *Andreas Nangerius*, who had an exquisite Discernment, and who, by a natural Antipathy against all that which is called *Point*, which he judg'd to be of an ill Relish, sacrific'd every Year in Ceremony, a Volume of *Martial's* Epigrams to the *Manes* of *Catullus*, in Honour to his Character, which he judg'd was to be prefer'd to that of *Martial*. I find nothing to say considerable on the Epigrammatists of latter Ages. 'Tis one of the Sorts of Verse, in which a Man has little Success; for it is a meer lucky Hit, if it prove well. An *Epigram* is little worth, unless it be admirable, and it is so rare to make them admirable, that 'tis sufficient to have made one in a Man's Life.

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It remains to speak of the *Madrigal*, the *Rondelay*, the *Sonnet*, the *Ballad*, and all the other little Verse, that are the Invention of these latter Ages; but as a little Fancy may suffice, to be successful in these Kind of

Works, without any *Genius*, I shall not amuse my self in making Reflections on the Method that is to be observ'd in composing them: not but that he who has a *Genius*, would have a much different Success, either by a more happy Turn he gives to what he writes, or by a more lively Air, or by more natural Beauties; or finally, by more delicate Fashions of Speech; and generally, the *Genius* makes the greatest Distinction in whatsoever Work a Man undertakes. The Character of the smaller Verse, and of all the little Works of Poesie, requires that they be natural, together with a Delicacy; for seeing the little Subjects afford no Beauty of themselves, the Wit of the Poet must supply that Want out of its own Stock. The *Sonnet* is of a Character that may receive more of Greatness in its Expression than the other little Pieces; but nothing is more essential to it, than the happy and natural Turn of the Thought that composes it. The *Rondelay* and *Madrigal* are most wretched, if they be not most elegant; and all their Beauty consists in the Turn that is given them. But it suffices to know what this Delicacy is, that ought to be the Character of these small Pieces, to understand all that belongs to them. A Word may be delicate several Ways; either by a subtle Equivocation, which contains a Mystery in the Ambiguity; or by a hidden Meaning, which speaks all out, whilst it pretends to say nothing; or by some fierce and bold Strokes under modest Terms; or by something brisk and pleasant, under a serious Air; or lastly, by some fine Thought, under a simple and homely Expression. We find all these Manners of Delicacy in some of the Ancients, as in the *Socrates* of *Plato*, in *Sappho*, in *Theocritus*, in

in *Anacreon*, in *Horace*, in *Catullus*, in *Petronius*, and in *Martial*; these are all great Models of this Character; of which the *French* have only, in their Tongue, *Marot*, a Gentleman of the Chamber to *Francis* the First. He had an admirable *Genius* for this Way of Writing; and whoever have been successful in it since, have only copied him. *Voiture* had a Nature for this Character; if he had not a little corrupted his Wit by the Reading of the *Spaniards* and *Italians*. If these Words are affected, they lose their Grace, because they become cold and flat, when they are far-fetch'd. But the most general Fault in these little Pieces of Verse, is, when one would cram them with too much Wit. This is the ordinary Vice of the *Spaniards* and *Italians*, who labour always to say Things finely. This is no very good Character; for they cease to be natural, whilst they take care to be witty. This is the Fault of *Quevedo*, in his Work of the *nine Muses*, of *Gongora* in his *Romances*, of *Prete* and *Testi* in their little Verse, of *Marino* in his *Idyllia*, of *Aquillini* in his *Madrigals*, and of all the other Strangers, who would refine by false Idea's of far-fetch'd Ornaments, and by Affectations of Wit, which have nothing of the solid Character, and the good Sense of the Ancients. Every small *Genius* is apt to run into this Vice, of which the late Collections of the *French* Poësies are full, where the Poets force themselves to be witty, in spite of their *Genius*; for they either never say Things as they ought to be said; or they say nothing in the great Discourses; or they load with Ornaments, Subjects that are not capable to suffer any; or they discover all their Art, when it should be conceal'd; or they give themselves

over to the Beauty of their Nature, without Method; or finally, they lose themselves in their Idea's, because they have not Strength to execute handsomely what their Fancy dictates to them.

XXXIII.

Were I of a Humour to decide, I might add to these Reflections the Solution of some Difficulties in the Use of *French* Poësie, that to me seem worthy to be clear'd. The first is concerning the *Transposition of Words*, which some Poets seem to affect, in the great Poems, as a Kind of Figure, which they pretend to make use of, to give more Force and Nobleness to their Discourse. But *Ronsard*, in the Preface of his Poem of the *Franciad*, is not of that Opinion. For he believes not the *French* Tongue to have a Character proper to bear in its Expression, that Sort of *Transpositions*. In effect, it is too simple and too plain to wind about the Words, and give them another Order than that of the natural Sense, which they ought to have. I refer to those who understand good Speaking, better than I do. The second Difficulty is, the Use of *Thou*, and *Thee*, which the Poets employ when they speak to GOD, or to the King. This Use to me seems neither founded on Authority nor on Reason. For, besides that the Authority of the *Latin* Tongue, on which they build, is a false Foundation; because that Tongue equally uses *Thou* and *Thee* in Prose and in Verse, for all Sort of Persons; our Tongue is, of it self, of a Character so respectful, that it cannot be content with those Terms, for Persons to whom it would give Ho-

Honour. But nothing to me appears more strong against this Use, than the Manner which the Poets themselves practise. For those who say *Thou* and *Thee* to God, and to great Persons, never speak so to their Mistresses, because they believe that would want *Respect*. 'Tis true, that *Theophile* has said so to his, but this was said no more after the Language became polish'd; and *Voiture* never us'd it. This is a Scruple I have, and which I leave to the Criticks to examine. The third Difficulty is the Use of *Metaphors*; for the *French* Tongue is essentially so scrupulous, that it allows nothing but what is modest, and the least Thing of Boldness offends its Modesty. But this would be too great a Delicacy to forbid *Metaphors* to Poets, with the same Rigor as to Orators. There are *Metaphors* authoriz'd by Use, which *Poesie* cannot pass by. It behoves a Poet to use them discreetly, without shocking the Modesty of our Language. It requires a great Judgment to distinguish what ought to be said in proper Terms, and what in *Metaphorical*. The same Censure may be pass'd on the Boldness of Compounding and Coining new Words. *Du-Bartas* has made himself ridiculous, by attempting to imitate *Homer* and *Pindar* in the Invention of these Kind of Words. The fourth Difficulty is the Constraint of *Rhime*: but this can only be a Difficulty to the weaker Sort of Wits, who suffer themselves to be master'd by this Servitude, which a great *Genius* employs, to give the more Force to his Thoughts, and more Greatness to his Sentiments. The last Difficulty, and the most important of all the Rest, is to know, Whether one may please in Poetry against the Rules? I apply this to the *French* Poetry parti-

cularly, though it be common to Poetry in general; because most Part of our *French* makes a false Liberty of this bad Principle. 'Tis only by this, that *Moliere* would salve the ordinary Irregularity of his Comedies. 'Tis true, that his Rashness has been successful; and that he has pleas'd in his Pieces against Art. But I pretend that neither he, nor any others shall ever please, but by the Rules: They have some natural Draughts whereby they are successful, and these Draughts are the Strokes of Art; for Art, as I have said, is nothing else, but *good Sense reduc'd to Method*. 'Tis only these Strokes that are taking in irregular Pieces, where what is irregular never pleases, because 'tis never natural.

XXXIV.

Finally, to conclude with a Touch of Morality. Since the Reputation of being modest, is more worth than that of making Verses; were I to make any, I wou'd never forsake Honesty nor Modesty. For if nothing renders Men more ridiculous, than the kind Opinion they conceive of themselves, and of their Performances; the Poets are yet more ridiculous than other Men, when their Vanity rises from the Difficulty of succeeding well in their Mystery. But if I made Verse better than another, I wou'd not force any Man to find them good; I would not have a greater Opinion of my self, though all the World applauded them; nor should the Success blind me: Amongst the Praises that were bestow'd on me, I could not persuade my self to suffer those, where appear'd ought of Favour; and I wou'd impose silence on them, who in com-
mending

mending me, spoke further than my Conscience, To save my self from that Ridiculousness, which some vain Spirits fall into, who would have Praises and Admirations eternally for every Thing they do ; I wou'd employ all my Reason, and all my Wit, to gain more *Dacility*, and more Submission to the Advice my Friends should give me ; I would borrow their Lights, to supply the Weakness of mine ; and I wou'd listen to all the World, that I might not be ignorant of any of my Faults. In the Praises that I gave to those I found worthy, I wou'd be so Conscientious, that for no Interest whatsoever, wou'd I speak against my Opinion ; and there shou'd never enter into any Thing that went from my Hands, any of those mercenary Glances, which so greatly debase the Character of a Poet. Lastly, I would rid my self of all the ridiculous Vanities, to which those who make Verse are ordinarily obnoxious : And by this prudent Conduct I wou'd endeavour to destroy those Frumpries, which, by Custom, are said of a Profession that might continue honourable, were it only exercis'd by Men of honourable Principles.

Names

Names of the **AUTHORS** whose
P O E M S are Mentioned, and
Censured in this Book.

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| A Ppollon. Rhodius | Caresantes |
| Aristophanes | Casimire |
| Acquillini | Coluthus |
| Aratus | |
| Archilochus | D Ante |
| Ausonius | Diego Ximenes |
| Ariosto | |
| Anacreon | E Nnius |
| Actius | Euripides |
| | Eschylus |
| B Accbylides | Erastasthenes |
| Bembo | |
| Boccace | F Racastorius |
| Boyardo | |
| Bonnesfons | |
| Bonarelli | G Allus |
| Brebeuf | Garnier |
| Buchanan | Gracchus |
| Du-Bartas | Grotius |
| Boetius | Guarini |
| | Gongara |
| C Alphurnius | |
| Catullus | H Omer |
| Cesar | Hesiod |
| Callimachus | Horace |
| Claudian | Heinsius |
| Camoens | Habert |
| Chiabrera | |
| Calaber | I O N |
| Cervantes | |

L Iuius Andronicus

Lotichius

Lope de Vega

Lucretius

Lucilius

Lucan

Lycophron

Lane

M Agdelenet

Marot

Malapertus

Mecanas

Menander

Martial

Malherb

Moliere

Molza

Le Moyne

Marino

Muret

Museus

Mamercus

N Emefianus

Nicander

Nonnus

O Vid

Oppian

Orpheus

Oliviero

P Rudentius

Pontanus

Politianus

Paleotti

Philetas

Preti

Pindar

Plautus

Propertius

Persius

Petrarch

Pulci

Petronius

Pacuvius

Q Ueveda

R Abelaïs

Racan

Ronsard

Rotrou

Reignier

Rutilius

S Appho

Sophocles

Seneca

Sidonius Apollinaris

Sidronius

Stephonius

Stattius

Silius Italicus

Scaliger Julius

Scaliger Josephus

Sadolet

Sanazarius

Sarazin

Sancte Marthe

Serres

Sosithus

Tasso

T *Asso Bernardo*
Tasso Torquato
Tryphiodorus
Theocritus
Terence
Tibullus
Testi
Tyrtaeus

Tristan
Trissino
Theophile

V *Aler. Flaccus*
Virgil
Vida
Voiture

The

The Author's PREFACE to The Reflections upon History.

BESIDES that this Work is but a rude Essay upon the Manner of writing History, and what I have drawn from too superficial Acquaintance with ancient and modern Historians; the natural Diffidence that I have of my self, inclines me to fear, that Impatience or Inadvertency may have forced out of my Hands, what could never have lain under them long enough to appear tolerable at its coming abroad. But that I may not disgust my Readers by too much undervaluing the Present I am about to make them, I shall, without Scruple, confess, That 'tis a Kind of an Abridgment of whatever has been offer'd on this Subject, by the greatest Men of former or latter Ages; that 'tis an Extract of the most rational Observations, made by Dionysius Halicarnassæus in his Answer to Pompey the Great, who desir'd his Judgment upon the Greek Historians, and their several Characters: that 'tis a Copy taken from the most judicious Reflections of Lucian, in his admirable Treatise of the historical Stile. In a Word, that the Notions which I advance in this Discourse, are not properly mine, but are rather those of Patricius, in his Dialogues of Marucci, Mascard, Beni, Cabrera, and other modern Criticks of Spain and Italy.

But as 'tis possible, I may have spoilt their Thoughts by the Intermixture of my own; so I declare beforehand, That I don't look upon it as a Point of Honour, absolutely to convince my Reader of all that I say. I am not here enacting Laws; for which I have no Authority or Jurisdiction: I am barely offering Advice, which may be taken or rejected at Pleasure: Nay, so far am I from presuming to give Instructions to any Person living, that I am dispos'd to receive them from all the World. For, if I have not Judgment enough to attain that Exactness which is necessary

The Author's Preface. &c. VOL. II

cessary to so important a Design, I have yet enough to suspect my Abilities, and to apprehend my Danger.

Again, there's so much true Wisdom in not hanging out the Sign of Wisdom, and so much good Sense in being modest, that I could gladly have soften'd my own Conjectures with Aristotle's Perhaps, or Cicero's It seems, that I might be the less positive, and might declare my self with greater Caution and Reserve, if that Simplicity to which I have confin'd my Style, would admit this Way of Expression. For a very little Share of Prudence will keep a Man from being forward in dictating and deciding, in an Age remarkably obstinate and self-opinative.

To proceed, the Discourse which I am going to make of History, is by no means of the severe Character of that of Lucian, who never commends those that write well, but for an Occasion of Exposing those that write ill, and under his seeming Approbation of good Authors, conceals a most refin'd and artful Satyr upon the Bad. I am not of this Temper, nor have I an evil Thought against any Man. All that I propose, is so to lay open to the intelligent Reader, the great Hazard of attempting History, as a Work in which 'tis so very difficult to succeed; and to observe to him that the Judgment of Dionysius Halicarnassæus upon Thucydides, is alone sufficient to strike Terror into any discreet Author who is engaging in the same Field.

In fine, to add somewhat concerning the Character of the Work, after having spoken of the Workman: I here profess that the leading Quality intended in these Reflections, is rather Soundness of Sense, than Refinement of Politicks, though the latter be that which the Curious and Inquisitive are wont chiefly to seek for in History. For as false Policy is the Vainest of all Arts and Sciences, so all true Policy is built upon good Sense, as its most universal and most solid Foundation. Nor do I pretend to offer all that can be said on this Matter, or to drain a Subject which is really inexhaustible.

R E.

REFLECTIONS

UPON

HISTORY.

OF all ingenious Compositions and Labours of the Mind, there is none more noble, and more worthy of a Gentleman, than History; not only because he that would succeed in this Way, ought to be ignorant of nothing; but because an Historian, of all Authors, spreads out the most ample Theatre, and erects the greatest Tribunal in the World. For 'tis his Office to sit supreme Judge of all that passes in the World, to pronounce the Destiny of all the great Ones of the Earth, and to fix their Character with Posterity; to give Lessons to all People and Nations, and direct the Conduct of Ages. What Strength of Genius can be sufficient for so important an Enterprise? Let us endeavour, therefore, to form a right Apprehension of its Excellence, and of the Rules by which it is successfully to be perform'd. And what can we conceive more fair and lovely than that Kind of Writing, which knows how to do Justice to Vertue and Worth, in bestowing Eternity upon good Actions? The following Remarks will, perhaps, contribute something to the carrying History to that Perfection which sets it above all other

Wri-

Pulcrum imprimis videtur, non pati occidere quibus aeternitas debeat. Plin. Ep.

Writings; if the Love of good Sense, which every Day seems to advance amongst us, may be able to keep its Ground, in spite of all the new Tastes which Caprice and Vanity are ever striving to introduce by the false Colours, and the misconceiv'd Idea's of Wit.

I.

Nothing can be more difficult, than to say precisely what is the best Manner of writing History. A Man ought to follow that which he finds to be most in vogue with the Age, and most agreeable to the Taste of those for whom he writes. But is this enough to secure the good Liking of Posterity? Let us see by what means we may deserve the Suffrage of a Judge, which is so nice and delicate, so severe and incorrupt, and which never honours with its Approbation any Thing but true Merit. If then, a Man writes nobly, sensibly, with Purity, and with Simplicity, in any Language, he must for ever please. These are universal Principles, which alone can stand the Test of all People and Times, there being no other general Rules in the World, besides those of Reason and good Sense. By this means, *Thucydides, Xenophon, Salust, Cesar, Livy, Buchanan, Mariana*, and Authors of the like Character, have been always entertain'd with Favour, though they wrote in Ages and Countries of so very different a Genius; and therefore we may expect the same Favour, if we are able to write in the same Manner. What Grandour, what Judgment, what Politeness; but above all, what Simplicity, do we find and admire in the Labours of these great Men?

II.

He then, that shall engage in writing History, must consider how he may write nobly. For when a Man speaks to the whole World, and to all Ages, he is invested with such a Character, as gives him Authority to lift up his Voice, because he Addresses himself to Kings and Princes, and to the great Men of all Countries and Times, and because he is, in some Sort, the common Master and Instructor of Mankind. Nor is there any Thing more essential to History, than the Giving of this rais'd Turn to the whole Discourse. An Historian, therefore, must reject all that is low, or vulgar in Stile; so as to make the Dignity of his Expression, comport with the Dignity of his Subject: He must accustom himself, to form a great and worthy Conception of every Thing that passes through his Mind; he must, by the exact Choice of Words, endeavour to give Weight to his Thoughts, and Force to his Language, carefully seeking out every Thing that may enrich or exalt it; if he would imprint a Character of Greatness on all that he says. The Standards in this Kind, are *Thucydides* among the *Greeks*, and *Livy* among the *Romans*. They are almost the only Two, that have been able to sustain this Grandour of Stile, with the same Spirit and Tone, without falling into the low, or even the moderate Character. *Herodotus*, by too servile an imitation of *Homer*, when Things require Sublimity, sometimes flies into Enthusiasm; as *Longinus* has observ'd. *Tacitus*, who is seldom great upon any Score, but because he is concise, cannot be a good Pattern; his greatness

S

having

*Genua hoc
scribendi
incitatum
atque cla-
tum esse de-
bere, quis
ignorat?*

*Addit
historiae
majorem
sonum vo-
cis Anti-
pater, ca-
teri non
exornato-
res rerum,
sed san-
tummod
narratores
fuerunt.
Idem.*

having nothing of Nature in it. In General, great Care must be applied to distinguish true Greatness from false. *Cesar* perfectly understood this Secret; who in the Narrative of his Affairs in *Egypt*, of which he scarce omitted any Particular, yet says not a Word of his Intrigue with *Cleopatra*, though very much at his Heart; well knowing that he could not mention it with that serious Air which the noble Spirit of History demands, and that he could say nothing well upon so light and impertinent a Subject. 'Tis, in Virtue of his Office and Dignity of an Historian, that he treats that Princess with the last Indifference; his Passion cannot force him to deliver any Thing contrary to his Judgment, and to that wise and just Character of Writing which he so happily pursued. It is not in swelling Words, in soaring Expressions, in the Pride or Flourish of Discourse, that the noble Style of History should be suppos'd to consist: Which was the Thing that mis-led *Ammianus Marcellinus*, *Lampridius*, and most of the other Historians in the Decline of the *Roman* Empire. But, 'tis in a Loftiness, and yet a Modesty of Expression, in a Way of Speech able to sustain the strongest, and to elevate the weakest Subject; 'tis in that well-temper'd Greatness, which *Quintilian* ascribes to true Eloquence. 'Tis not enough to have a bright Wit, but a Man must have a lofty Genius, to write in this Manner, and to raise every Thing that he says by the Choice of Words, and the Largeness of Thoughts. This Talent is so very rare, that if we except out of the Number of Historians all those who have not been Masters of it, there will remain very few to share the Prize. But still, the Desire of writing nobly, can-

Magna,
non nimia;
sublimis,
non abrupta;
fortis
non temeraria;
severa,
non tristis;
gravis,
non tarda;
lasciva,
non luxuriosa;
plena,
non turgida.
Quint.

cannot excuse a Man from writing naturally: He must be noble without soaring too high; and he must be natural without sinking too low.

III.

To write sensibly, is to go directly to the Point, without wandering or amusing our selves by the Way; 'tis to represent Things with an Air of Prudence and Reserve, not giving a Loose to the Heat of Imagination, or the Vivacity of Wit; 'tis to know how to suppress discreetly whatever would be too much in a Sentence, as those Adverbs and Epithets, which diminish Things under an Intention of enlarging them; to leave nothing that shall seem idle, languid, or unprofitable; generously to retrench that which ought not to be said, how fine soever it may look; constantly to prefer that which is solid to that which is glittering; never to discover Heat and Flame, when the Subject requires a Coldness of Affection, and a Seriousness of Temper; to examine every Thought, and to weigh every Word, with so just and exquisite a Sense, as to let nothing escape, but what is accurately judicious. It is, to have Strength enough to resist the Temptation we are naturally under of shewing our Parts, like that impertinent Historian, who in the Defeat of the *Parthians* by the Emperor *Severus*, was not contented that *Ostroes* should save himself in any other Place, but in a delightful Grotto, shaded with Laurels and Myrtles, and thus made himself ridiculous by attempting to be agreeable, which is the most slippery Step that an Author can take. It is, to leave it free for the Reader to

*Delectus
verborum
habendus,
& ponde-
ra singulo-
rum exa-
minanda.*

*Luciande
Conscrib.
Histor.*

suppose what ought not always to be express'd. In a Word, 'tis to know how to save all seeming Contradictions, and to establish a general Probability in what we deliver. This sensible Character, this wise Spirit of History, obliges a Man to set so strict a Guard upon himself, as to suffer nothing too big or extravagant, and perpetually to avoid those bold Strokes, and hardy Imaginations, the common Fault of too bright or too luxuriant a Wit; so as to decide the greatest Things in a few Words. This is *Salust's* Excellence, who holds Councils, fights Battels, takes Cities, over-runs Kingdoms, with such a Brevity of Stile, and so Rapid an Expression, as lets us into his Meaning at half a Word. *Tacitus* had enough of this good Sense to make him succinct, but not to make him easy and intelligible. We cannot bear the precipitate Haste of this Author, upon some Occasions, who loses much of his Grace, and falls into Obscurity, by endeavouring to collect, in short, that which required a greater Compass. The Pride he takes in being concise, robs us of a good Part of his Instructions, by his not opening Matters so fully as he ought. *Polybius* and *Appian*, are sometimes in the other Extreme. There is a Kind of wise and judicious Silence, which often sets out the Greatness of Things, when any Words would be too weak. It is a Master-Talent to omit what cannot be express'd with Advantage: And the true Discernment necessary for an Historian, is to know when to contract, and when to magnify, so as to give every Thing that just Figure which is consistent with *Propriety* and *Decorum*. For *Livy*, as diffus'd as he is, is yet never tedious, because his Judgment never fails to go his greatest

greatest Lengths. But *Thucydides*, by too rigorous a Pursuit of good Sense, sometimes falls into a Driness and Austerity, which we should not easily Pardon, but for the Sake of his pure and masculine Stile. So difficult it is for a Man to write sensibly, without parting with some of those Beauties which he might have put into his Work, if he had been less sagacious. It should therefore be an allow'd Maxim with Authors, that the greatest Beauty of a Composition is always good Sense. We are tired with all other Beauties; but good Sense can never tire. It is wholly owing to his good Sense, that *Philip de Comines*, in spite of the rude and unpolish'd Language of his own Times, has merited the Esteem and Approbation of ours. But none of the modern Historians have written more sensibly than *Mariana* in his History of *Spain*. That Quality alone has rendred his Work a Master-piece of these latter Ages. There is a Vein of Wisdom running through the Whole, which never permits him either to be over-curious in those Places that require Wit and Fineness, or to be over-negligent in those which do not. This judicious Equality which he so strictly observes under all the Inequalities of his Subjects, is a Secret little known to the Historians of our Days. But still the Art of Thinking sensibly is insufficient, unless join'd with the Art of Expressing purely.

IV.

An Historian that desires to be read by Posterity, must observe Purity in his Writings. Without this recommendation, no Historian *Historico sermoni*
decus consiliet perspicuitas proprietasque verborum. Beni, de Hist.

can be long-liv'd. 'Tis only for Want of a pure Stile, that so many Historians, both *Greek* and *Latin*, mention'd by *Photius*, and other Collectors, have perish'd in the vast Shipwreck; and that of the almost infinite Number recounted by *Vossius*, those few only remain, who have shewn themselves so rational and judicious, as to deserve their good Fortune. 'Tis idle, therefore, for a Man to attempt the Writing of History, unless he perfectly understands his Language, and is Master of its purest Vein. For he that would instruct, must first of all endeavour to express himself clearly, and to be easie to the Under-

*Quid tam
necessari-
um, quam
recta locu-
tio? Quint.*

*Cura mag-
na sentien-
di & lo-
quendi;
sed dissimu-
latio cura
præcipua.
Idem.*

*Nihil est
in historiâ,
purâ &
illustri bre-
vitate dul-
cius. Cic.
in Brut.*

*In senten-
tiâ, nihil
absurdum,
aut, alie-
num, aut
subinsulsum;
in verbis nihil inquinatum, abjectum, non aptum, du-
rum, longè petitum. Idem de Opt. Gen. Or.*

standing. He that speaks well cannot fail of being heard by all the World; but he that speaks ill, says nothing as he ought, and Per-spicuity, which is the greatest Beauty of an historical Stile, is inseparable from Purity. This Purity consists for the most Part in a Propriety of Words, in a natural Disposition of Phrases, and in a prudent and moderate Use of Figures. A pure Stile must have nothing that is improper, nothing that is foreign, nothing hard, or low, or bold, or obscure. *Herodotus* has excell'd all the *Greeks* in this Purity of Stile, as *Cæsar* has all the *Latins*. There was a general Corruption of Wit in the following Ages, which can shew no Mark or Footstep of this ancient Purity. *Quintus Curtius*, by aiming at too much Politeness, has lost much of that grand and majestick Air, which so well becomes *Salust* and *Livy*. He is unreasonably florid in several Parts of his Work, as in the Description of the River *Marsyas*, at the Entrance of the third Book; the Adventure

ture

ture of *Abdolonymus* made a Prince from a Gardner, in the fourth Book: The Siege of Tyre, and the voluptuous Life of *Alexander*, overcome by the Softness and Luxury of *Persia*, after he had appear'd Invincible in all the Dangers of War: The Grief of *Sisigambis* at *Alexander's* Death: And in several other Places, which discover an Affectation of Elegance, no way comporting with the Gravity of an Historian, who should be entirely unaffected. But farther, this Purity of Expression must be supported by a Greatness of Sense. For nothing is so insipid, as an Elegance void of Substance, that speaks finely, and says nothing. And sometimes it happens, that too studied a Purity of Discourse upon great Subjects, impairs their Greatness; as appears in the History of the *Indies*, by *Maffeus*, and in Cardinal *Bentivoglio's* War of *Flanders*. The one and the other of these Authors were too solicitous of Pleasing by their polite Manner, not considering, that the most artful Beauties are not always the most charming, and that the fairest Ornaments are no better than a Disguise, when excessive and disproportion'd.

Non debet quisquam, ubi maxima rerum momenta versantur, de verbis esse sollicitus. Quint. Ut monilibus & margaritis, quæ sunt ornamenta feminarum, deformantur viri; nec habitus triumphalis, quo nihil augustius, feminas decet. Quint.

Ornatus omnis, non tam sua, quam rei cui adhibetur conditione, constat. Idem.

V.

And this should oblige a Man to endeavour, in the next Place, to write with Simplicity, as the best Means of avoiding that pompous, and that affected Air, both so inconsistent with the noble Character, to which History aspires. For every Thing that's great ceases

*Si oratio
perderet
gratiam
simplicis
& inaffe-
ctati colo-
ris, perde-
ret & fi-
dem. Quin.*

to be so, if not plain and simple; and that which is plain and great at the same Time, redoubles its greatness, and becomes sublime and august. Again, nothing is more proper for Instruction, or more attractive of publick Credit and Belief, than this Simplicity of Stile, so highly valued by the Ancients, and so little known to the Moderns. All Exaggeration has an Air of Falsehood; and Nature, which is to be imitated in all Things, never speaks otherwise than plainly and familiarly. But in order to our right apprehension of this Simplicity, so essential to good Stile, we must observe that there are Sorts of it: There is a Simplicity of Words, as in *Cesar*; a Simplicity of Thoughts, as in *Salust*; a Simplicity of Design and Ordonnance, as in *Thucydides*, so much applauded by *Dionysius Halicarnassens*. The Moderns who have come the nearest to this Character, are *Philip de Comines* among the French, *Guicciardin* and *Paulus Aemilius* among the Italians, *Buchanan* among the Scots, *Mariana* among the Spaniards. Besides these, the Generality seek to support themselves by Purity, Politeness, and other Ornaments of Speech, only because they have not a Genius great enough to be capable of Simplicity; and they dress up the Truth in Flourish and Paraphrase, because they have not Force enough to shew it naked and unattired. Happy the Man, that can attain this Secret in Writing, to be intelligible to the Ignorant, and yet to charm the Wise! But 'tis one of the hardest Tasks to acquire such an even and natural Vein, as alone can produce this Simplicity of Stile. To be plain, and yet not to be low, or frigid, demands a Genius beyond the ordinary

dinary Standard. For he that seeks for Simplicity, must, above all, be industrious in avoiding Meanness. But in what then does this admirable Simplicity consist; which is the sovereign Perfection of great Designs; and what is it to write according to such a Character? It is to make Use of those Words that are the most familiar, and the most proper, and always the fullest of Sense; such as those of *Menelaus* in *Homer*, whom the Poet has made so exact a Pattern of concise, agreeable, natural, and never redundant Eloquence. It is to think and speak our native Thoughts and Words; without giving either too much Vivacity to our Expression, as *Srada*; or too much Brightness to our Imagination, as *Grotius* has done, in the Story of the Wars of the Low Countries. It is, to form such Ideas as are great, and yet shall appear very common, without interpoling so much of Argument, and Reflection as *Davila* has made Use of in his History of the Civil Wars of *France*: For when a Man whose Business should be to report Fact, is thus bent upon Reasoning, 'tis no longer Nature that speaks, but 'tis Art and Study; and these labour'd Discourses have a Twang of Declamation, and of the School. It is, to intermix no other Ornaments with a Narration, than what the Modesty of Truth can bear. It is to express that graceful Sweetness of *Xenophon*, which no Affectation can ever reach. Lastly, It is to have that wonderful Skill at pruning off the Luxuriancy of Speech, which *Phocion* possess'd in so eminent a Degree; of whom *Demosthenes*, tho' himself a very great Master of Simplicity, said, when he saw him standing up in Court to reply to an Oration of his, *There is the Sword which will cut off*

*Homervm,
breve
quâdam
cum animâ
jucunditate,
pro-
priam, ca-
rentem su-
perfluis E-
loquenti-
am, Mene-
lao dedit;
quæ sunt
Virtutes
generis
primi.*

*Exponere
Simplici-
ter, sine ul-
lâ exorna-
tione. Cic.
Non dicere
ornatius,
quam sim-
plex ratio
veritatis
ferat.*

off Idem;

*Xenophon-
is illam
iucundita-
tem inaffe-
ctatam,
quam nul-
la affecta-
tio conse-
qui possit,
ut ipsa ser-
monem
gratia fin-
xisse vide-
rentur.
Quint.*

off all that was superfluous in my Discourse. To confirm this Character, which besides a large Stock of Wisdom and good Sense, requires much Exercise, and long Meditation; we ought to avoid all Commerce with Authors, of too fruitful an Invention, so as to keep clear from that Profuseness of false Conceits, and strain'd Expressions, and from all those Fopperies that pretend to Sense; into which Men are easily betray'd, if they have not a true Discernment and a just Apprehension. The Models that we ought to set before us, for this Way of Writing are only the Antients; and amongst them only the most easie and familiar. *Hermogenes* proposes *Theocritus* and *Anacreon*, as the great Masters of Simplicity: and indeed they have no Superiors in that Excellence. According to *Longinus's* Censure, *Herodotus* is too bold and adventurous. *Dionysius Halicarnassaeus* complains, that *Thucydides*, tho' an Author of great Simplicity, yet has clog'd some of his Narrations with too many Facts. *Xenophon* and *Polybius* are too much for Philosophizing, and often break the Thread of their Story, to give Way to their moral Reflections. But what Caution and Reserve, what true Sobriety of Discourse appears in *Cesar's* Account of the Battle of *Pharsalia*, in which his Rival was entirely defeated? What natural Simplicity shines thro' the whole Narration? Who would conceive, that the Historian had any Manner of Share in the Action, or the Victory! *Plutarch* may pass for another great Original in this Character of Simplicity, which discovers it self through all his Works. Nor does *Livy*, in my Judgment appear more admirable for all his other good Qualities, than for this one Perfection. The Course of his History may be resembled

to a great River, running with compos'd Majesty, and stately Smoothness: As that of *Tacitus* is like a rich and fruitful Stream, too apt to overflow its Banks. For the latter is scarce ever exactly just in his Conceptions, and very often overstrain'd in his Expression, only because he wants the Gift of Simplicity. *Diodorus Siculus* has too great a Shew of Learning in all he writes. *Mariana* is one of the most accomplish'd of modern Historians, because he is one of the most Simple. For Simplicity of Stile in great Subjects, must necessarily be it self attended with Nobleness and Grandour. These are the Qualities, which make the Ground-work of History, and which we may call the first Elements of its Beauty: Which must still shine more in the Genius and Character of an Historian, than in his Stile or Discourse. Other Strokes are necessary to finish the Piece; which I shall but lightly Touch over, in such Order and Method as they occur to my Thoughts. I begin with the Matter and the Form, that is, with the most essential Parts of History.

VI.

'Tis a wide Field of Matter that, which exercises an Historian: For it spreads itself through the whole Course of humane Actions, through Peace and War, Councils and Negotiations, Embassies and Intrigues, and through all the various Affairs and Adventures of Life. *In rebus* *Cicero* requires two Conditions, in the Matter of History; that it consist of Things great *magnis* in themselves, and worthy of publick Memory *memoria-* and Fame. No Man has better explain'd the *que dignis* *historia* *versatur.*

Art Cic.

*Historiam
assuetam
discurrere
per negoti-
orum celsi-
tudines,
non humi-
lium minu-
tias inda-
gare causa-
rum. Am.
Marc.*

*Equidem
non affir-
mare susti-
neo de qui-
bus dubito,
nec subdu-
cere quæ
accepi.
Q. Curt.*

Art of choosing a Subject for History, than *Dionysius* in the Preface to his own; as also in his Judgment of *Thucydides*, to whose Choice he prefers that of *Herodotus*, and alledges the Reasons of his Preference. But since, in History especially, Falshood so often wears the Dress of Truth, there is need of deep Penetration, and exact Discernment, rightly to separate the true Motives of important Actions from their Colours and Appearances, and so to make a wise Choice of the Matter, which can alone be refin'd and beautified by the ranging of Circumstances, and by that just Order to which we are to bring every Thing that is too loose, that we may enclose it within its proper Limits, and natural Extent. When the Materials are thus reduc'd; the Historian must gain a perfect Dominion over them, by a profound Meditation on his Subject, which he should thoroughly be acquainted with, and should fully comprehend. But then he must be so religiously strict as never to abuse the publick Faith, by delivering either Conjectures as Truths, or Certainties as bare Probabilities. He must search the Records and Instructions, with which he is furnish'd, and if possible, to their very Fountain, in order to the making a just Estimate of their Weight. He must advance nothing upon common Fame, and the Discourse of the Town, which is always of uncertain Authority. He must ensure nothing, but upon undoubted Memoirs, and faithful Relations. He must not too credulously give up his Assent to the Historians that went before him; lest he should lose his Way by following bad Guides. He must make a wide Distinction between Reports manifestly Partial, or suspected of Interest and Preju-

Prejudice, and those which lie under no such Imputation. He must always be upon his Guard against the Bias and Affection of those that supply him with Matter : For Prepossession is the great and universal Source of false History. *Herodotus* whom *Cicero* represents as so very fabulous, made use of very evil and deceitful Memoirs, as *Josephus* informs us. *Thucydides* resolving to profit by his Fault, has confin'd himself to the History of his own Time, so as to avoid all Jealousy and Suspicion, of writing what he had not either seen in Person, or receiv'd from credible Witnesses, and from those Instruments, which he had procur'd with so much Expence, not only on the *Athenian* Side, but on the *Lacedemonian* ; that he might be rightly appriz'd of all that pass'd between them. *Xenophon*, *Polybins* and *Procopius*, took much the same Method. *Dion Cassius* declares at the Entrance of his History, that he spent ten Years in preparing Materials. *Petrarch* reports, that *Salust* made a Voyage into *Africa*, to observe the Situation of the Places that he should have occasion to mention, in the Story of *Jugurtha's* War, not daring to trust any Thing but his own Eyes. For the great and important Point with an Historian, is to know and be satisfied that he writes upon good Grounds. *Lucian* exposes an Author of his Time, who writ a Narrative of a certain War, meerly upon Town-talk ; having never so much as seen any Man, that had been in the Country where the decisive Battle was fought. And *Vopiscus* would not engage in the History of the Reign of *Aurelian*, but upon the Assurance given him by *Junius Tiberianus*, the great Minister of State, that he should be furnish'd with the best Papers and Records. Nor is it enough

Apud Herodotum sunt innumera fabulae.
Cic. de Leg. Marcel. lin. in vit. Thucyd.

Salustius maria transgressus dicitur ut oculis suis crederet de conditionibus locorum.

Vopisc. in Præfat.

for

Hist. L.
XII.

for a Man to have been even Personally concern'd in Affairs, unless he has a Genius fit to dispose and represent them. *Polybius* tells us, *Callisthenes* was an Eye-witness of the Battel between *Alexander* and *Darius*, in the Streights of *Cilicia*; and yet that he committed great Absurdities in his Account of this important Action, by Reason of his Unskillfulness in the military Art, and in the Order of Battel, then observ'd. An Historian, therefore must be well assur'd of his Matter: For he cannot want Matter if he has a Capacity and Genius; but he will want this Assurance, if he has not a peculiar Insight into the Facts that he relates. How many false Accounts have deceiv'd the World, only because the Fountains of them, were Poyson'd by Interest and Party? As therefore, nothing is more at Hand than the Materials of History, which may very easily be good and agreeable; so there is nothing more rare than the Certainty, with which they ought to be accompanied, to render them just and accurate, which we scarce ever meet with, because 'tis generally over-rul'd by Prejudice. For which Reason, we ought to Value the Advice of *Boccalin* upon this Point, which is, never to write but what we have seen, and never to publish in our Life-time: The best Security against Errors and Prejudice at once. But the chief Care of all should be, to chuse great Subjects, and such as are able to support themselves, by their own proper Weight. A noble Matter gives a Brightness and a Strength to Words: whereas in Subjects of little Consideration, we are obliged to keep up a continual Sport of Wit and Fancy, to supply their Want of solid Greatness, and intrinsic Worth.

VII.

The most essential Part of History is its Form, or Disposition: 'Tis by this that it appears great or little; and 'tis by this that we measure the Capacity of its Author. So that he who would succeed in it, must have a Soul susceptible of great Idea's; that when he has made himself Master of his Subject, he may cast his Matter into what Form he pleases. 'Tis by this Skill in Modelling, *Livy* has given his Work that elevated Character, not to be parallel'd in any other Historian, by striking upon all his Subjects the Colours they were naturally disposed to bear. 'Tis thus, that he paints the last Kings of *Rome* with all the Pride of an unlimited and independent Command: That he varies the Spirit of the Commonwealth, by the fierce and stubborn Vertue of the first Consuls, by the popular Commotions of the Tribunes, by the rigid and severe Government of the *Decemviri*, by the Luxury and Softness of the latter Consuls: that he distinguishes every Age by the Genius that reign'd in it, and even the different Motions of the same Genius in different Circumstances of Time, no way resembling each other: And that he always sustains his Dignity, by the great Ideas he fixes upon every Thing that comes before him. *Tacitus*, on the contrary, gives the same Form to all Sorts of Matter: with him Stratagem and Policy govern all: the Persons he describes have one and the same Genius, but differently made from all the rest of the World; they don't act by their own proper Character, but by that of the Historian, who with a Spirit too much

con-

*Tiberium
ascitum
quod ejus
arroganti-
am intro-
spexerit,
& com-
paratione
deterimâ
sibi glori-
am quæsi-
visse.*

Ann. 1.

*Dolabella
in absur-
dam adu-
lationem
progressus.*

Ann. 3.

*Suspecta-
bat Sullam
focors ejus*

ingenium, callidumq; adulatorem interpretando. Ann. 13.

Temporibus Neronis, sapientia pro inertia fuit. Ibid.

confin'd, and wrapt up in it self, gives the same Figures to his Expressions, and the same Turn to his Thoughts. Policy is the universal Motive: The Clue that unravels all Transactions. If *Augustus*, upon his Death-bed, make Choice of a Successor, he only designs to make his Loss lamented, by imposing upon the State, a worse Master than himself. If *Tiberius* constitute *Piso* Governor of *Syria*, 'tis only that he may set a Spy upon *Germanicus*, who at the same Time govern'd *Egypt*, and whose Glory he so much envied and fear'd. If the Flatteries of *Dolabella* displease him, 'tis because they are too gross and unartificial. If he banish *Sulla*, 'tis because he Interprets his Taciturnity, as a profound Dissimulation. The Modesty of the same Emperor is but a disguis'd Ambition; his Favours are Traps and Snares: His Moderation, Pride; his Religion, Grimace. That *Sejanus* should be admitted to his Bosom, and honour'd with the prime Ministry, is a Mark of the Anger and Displeasure of Heaven. *Arruntius*, that he might not fall into the Hands of a worse Successor, politically Poysons himself.

This Historian fails not to discover somewhat of Design in the Stupidity of *Claudius*, and somewhat of Delicacy in the Debauches and Brutality of *Nero*. The Folly and Foppery practis'd by some under this latter Emperor, passes with him for a Refinement of Wisdom. In a Word, all his Characters are alike, and there is nothing of Nature in the Piece; his Reflections seem overstrain'd and violent; and

and the Genius of the Historian, is without Variation, impress'd on his whole Work. *Mariana* takes a much wider Compass: the *Romans*, the *Carthaginians*, the *Christians*, the *Arabs*, the *Moors* and *Mahometans*, are represented by him under different Figures. The Author's Spirit no farther mixes it self with those of other Men, than to distinguish them according to their proper Characters, still opening as many new Ways, as are requir'd to the new and various Subjects that fall under his Conduct. And we may venture to say, that there is no modern History of a greater and nobler Form, than *Mariana's*.

VIII.

Romance studies only to please; and History only to instruct. This is their true and essential Difference: The latter having no other Aim to propose, but the Benefit of the Publick. For as it does not labour for the present only, its Views are not determin'd by Time, which is fleeting and passant, but by Posterity which never fails. What a Piece of Folly were it, to seek the Diversion of our own Ages, when we might advance the Benefit of all Ages? These are the Reasons that *Lucian* has urged, to prove that an Historian should endeavour only to be useful and profitable, in regulating the Heart and Spirit of Men, by the Lessons he gives them. 'Tis a Mistake, says that Critick, to pretend that History may be branch'd out into two Parts, the Profitable and the Agreeable: For an Historian should have no other View, but the Profit that may be derived to others from a true and sincere Narration: If he intermix

Alias in historiâ leges observandas; alias in poemate, in illâ ad veritatem quaque, in hoc ad delectationem referri pleraque Cic. de Leg.
O pulcra ista pars quæ actiones vitam-que bene format ac dirigit. Tac.

T

any

any Strokes of Agreeableness, he must do it, not to impair and corrupt the Truth, but to adorn and embellish it, to secure it a better Reception, and a kinder Welcome. And to justify his Opinion, he reports the Extravagances of those Authors of his own Time, who made themselves ridiculous, by writing upon other Principles.

*Græcis historiis ple-
rumque poetica simi-
lis est licentia.*

Quint.

Et quicquid Græcia mendax Audet in historia.

Quidam incredibilium relatu com-

mendationem parant, & le-

storem, aliud adu-

rum, si per quotidiana

duceretur, miraculo

excitant; & opus su-

um fieri populare non putant, nisi mendacio as-

Sen.

Herodotus labour'd to please the Age in which he liv'd: But then his Credit was so lessen'd with Posterity, as to cast a general Suspicion on the Fidelity of *Grecian* Story, to *Quintilian's* Time. *Photius* mentions an Historian, by name *Damascius*, who thought there was no other Art of Pleasing, but that of relating Things incredible. And *Seneca* complains of some Historians, his Contemporaries, that endeavour'd to signalize themselves only by their fabulous Reports. It has ever been the Genius of the Vulgar, to be delighted with Fiction: but good Sense and good Breeding, are affected with nothing but Truth. In the Ages following, the *Arabians* inserted so many idle Tales in all their Works, as to spoil most of the *Greek* Historians of those Days, by the Humour, that then reign'd, of reporting strange and surprising Adventures. They fancied, there was no Way to gain Approbation, but by surpassing Belief. The same Spirit infected a great Part of the modern *Greeks*; for which Reason, the Knowledge afforded us by the *Byzantine* History, is none of the surest in the World; because the Authors seem of a very loose and inaccurate Character. And he that makes use of their Memoirs in Writing, must, if he designs to be credited, guard against this Error and Misconception, with the most

cau-

cautious Diligence: For the least Allay of Falshood corrupts the whole Mass, and changes Truth into Fable. Nay, the truest Things, if they appear very extraordinary and incredible, ought not to be deliver'd, unless we give them an Air of Truth, or at least, a Colour of Probability. This was the Method of *Thucydides*; who tho' he saw *Herodotus* in Possession of so great Esteem, as to have his Books adorn'd with the Names of the Muses, yet resolved to say what was true, without any Care of saying what was delightful. *I had rather (says he) displease, by speaking the Truth, than please by reporting Fables: because by thus displeasing I may profit, and by thus pleasing I may prejudice my Readers.* Utilitatem juvandi prætulit gratia placendi. Plin. Pref. H. N. It should therefore be settled as a Maxim, that there is nothing fine in History, but what is real; and that Truth being indeed the greatest Satisfaction, an Historian that desires only to be pleasing, must for that very Reason, labour to be sincere.

IX.

Truth being the only Means by which History can be sure of instructing, ought to be its principal Rule, as the Ground and Foundation of the publick Faith. But where shall we find this Rule? Is there any Thing in the World more secret and obscure than Truth? For besides the Clouds, with which it is naturally encompass'd, 'tis likewise wrapt up in all the Disguizes, that the Heart of Man is capable of wearing. And if the common Ignorance of Writers, whose Views are narrow and confin'd, is so great an obstacle to the Truth, how much more their Insincerity, or Dishonesty? How many false

Judgments have been made, upon the false Prospects of Passion, or Interest, or the evil Prejudices and Pre-engagements of Errors, Opinion and Custom? So that while Truth is of a Nature thus strange and unknown to Men, either by Reason of its own Obscurity, or by their Want of Light, or of Attention and Regard, nothing can be more difficult, than to exhibit it pure and unmixed to the Publick. And since 'tis perpetually corrupted, and even profaned, by the base Liberty of Flatterers, the Generality of Historians being Pensioners of the Court, a Man must set himself above the Power of Hopes and Fears, and of all Kinds of Interest, when he engages in this great Attempt, so that he may always dare to speak the Truth. But it is not enough to have the Will and Courage of Speaking it; he must likewise have the Ability, by seeking it in its purest Sources, by ransacking the most curious Cabinets, by consulting the Instructions and Commissions of those, who have had a Hand in Affairs, so as to unravel the Mysteries of the most secret Negotiation. Above all, 'tis necessary, to study human Nature in general, to find out its true Spirit under all its Extravagances and Contradictions; to lay open the greatest Weakness of Man's Heart; to dive into his real Sentiments, so as not to be impos'd upon by false Colours; and to judge of him by those natural and unconcerted Motions that escape him, before he is aware. 'Tis thus that we must catch the true Thoughts and Disposition of the Heart, which upon these sudden Accidents has not Time to observe, or to disguise itself; whereas upon succeeding Reflection, it recollects it self, and puts on a Constraint and

and Reserve: Of which Tacitus has given a famous Instance, in the Behaviour of *Agrippina*, and of *Octavia*, Sister to *Britannicus*. When *Nero* contriv'd to poyson this young Prince at a Banquet, in the Moment that his Pains came upon him, the two Ladies, who were present, could not but be in an equal Surprize and Consternation: yet *Octavia* hoping to be *Nero's* Wife, and his Mother *Agrippina*, a Woman naturally ambitious, affecting the chief Government to her self, their Policy made them both recover their Temper, and that they might not disgust the Emperor, who was now ridding himself of his great Rival, they forced their Resentments, impos'd a Silence on their Grief, and sat out the Entertainment with the same Gaiety as if no Accident had interrupted it; while the brave unfortunate Prince was breathing his last, in the Antichamber. This is a noble Field of Study for an Author, that desires to let his Reader into the very Heart of the Persons he represents. And yet this is an Attainment which Men seldom aim at, and the Neglect of which has introduced so much Falshood into History. There is a certain Character of Wit, not ordinarily to be found, proper for the saying Things just as they are: This is the Talent of *Thucydides*, superior to all the Historians in Faith and Sincerity.

He had a Genius, and a Taste for Truth, and a nice Discernment to separate it from Falshood, which, together with the exactest Frame of Spirit, has gain'd him the Esteem and Approbation of all People and Ages. *Dionysius Halicarnassæus* especially, commends him for his Constancy in delivering strict Truth,

Agrippinae
pavor &
consterna-
tio mentis
emicuit,
quamvis
vultu pre-
meretur.
Octavia
quamvis
rudibus
annis Do-
lorem, cha-
ritatem,
affectus
omnes ab-
scondere
didicerat.
Ita post
breve silen-
tium, repe-
rita convi-
vii latitia.
Ann. 13.

*Rerum ge-
starum pro-
nuntiator
sincerus
Thucydides.*

*Cic. de
clar. Orat*

Scribe securus, dicas quod velis, habiturus mendaciorum comites, quos historica Eloquentia miramur autores.
Vopisc. Pref. apud Flor. Sabin.
Neminem scriptorum quantum ad historiam pertinet, non aliquid esse mentitum.
Vopisc. ibid.

Truth, and pretends that he never advanced any Thing against his Conscience. In which Regard he is vastly preferable to *Herodotus*, who had no Prospect but to please, and who, as *Strabo* assures us, out of a Gaiety of Spirit, diluted his History with Fable, to make it pass the more agreeably. The Historians of the declining Empire, were so gross Flatterers, that their Unfaithfulness discouraged *Vopiscus* from attempting the Story of his own Times, till the Governour of *Rome*, the Emperor's great Favourite and Minister, in his Conversation with him upon a Walk, eas'd him of this Scruple, by observing, that the most celebrated Authors had, in many Instances, shewn themselves not infallible. *Pollio* maintains that *Cesar* himself is often mistaken in his Commentaries, for Want of Leisure to examine what he relates. But now, if the greatest Men are subject to these Wandrings, how can those of inferior Capacity be steadfast and secure? And if Truth does not always shew her self in her native Purity, to the most elevated Genius's, how shall she be distinguish'd by those of the common Size, whose more stinted Measure of Wit and Spirit, does not suffer them to report Things, without varying the Circumstances, and either magnifying or diminishing the Objects? For there is no Gift so rare, and peculiar, as this Character of Exactness, and this Art of Painting Things to the true Life: because Men represent and describe, according as they conceive, and they conceive according to the Frame of their Imagination, and the Turn of their Head; so that among several Persons who have been Spectators of the same Thing, we seldom meet with any Two, that report it

whatever comes recommended with this Air,
Quaquam is embraced with Credit and Favour. *The*
vincta sit, *Stile of History,* says *Lucian,* must be clear and
soluta vi- sincere, Clearness being the Rule of Speaking, as Sin-
deri debet cerity ought to be the Rule of Thinking. The Lan-
oratio. guage must be free, though it seems confin'd,
Quint. and to give it its native Liberty, it should
Historia have less of Numbers than of Turn. But be-
non tam fi- cause 'tis chiefly by studying the Ancients,
nitos nu- that an Historian must form a Stile, accord-
meros, ing to his Genius, we may here set down some
quam orb- Observations, that he will probably make in
em contex- this Study, for the better suiting his Manner,
tumq; desi- to his Subject and Design. *Herodotus's* Stile is
derat. id. sweet, flowing, and agreeable: That of *Thu-*
In Herodo- *cydides,* is more great and noble, but perhaps
to omnia less easie and natural; nor can he reach the
leniter flu- Turn and the Numbers of *Herodotus.* *Xeno-*
unt, tum *phon* writ with an Air of Tendernefs and
ipsa diale- Sweetnefs: The clean and bright Current of
ctus habet his Discourse has nothing like it in all An-
jucundita- tiquity, unless we can match it in *Caesar's,* the
tem. id. purest of all the *Roman* Vein. The Remark
Thucydides of a modern Critick, as to the different Stile
præfractior of the Books of *the Civil War,* which he pre-
nec ita ro- tends not to be written with the same Purity
tundus: in as those of the War in *Gallia;* is a Nicety sur-
eo orbem passing my Apprehension: I have not a Taste
orationis fine enough for this Conceit; and much ra-
desidero. ther acquiesce in the Judgment of *Sueton,* who
Cic. makes no Distinction between them. I con-
Obscurus fess I am charm'd with the Elegance and
est, quia Simplicity of *Caesar:* No Man ever had the
pressus. id. Talent of Writing with greater Clearness.
Tribus li- But I am rais'd and fir'd, with the noble Man-
bris de bel- ner of *Livy.* It is now about two thousand
lo civili Years, that the Majesty of this Historian has
Cæsari commanded the Respect and Admiration of
falso a- all
scriptis,
nihil duri-
us, nec can-
dori Cæsar-
ianominus
Conveni-
ens. Flor.
Sabin,

all the World. Nothing so fills my Soul, as that excellent Choice of Words, which are always proportion'd to his Thoughts, and that genuine Expression of his Thoughts, which are always conformable to his Subject. In one Word, 'tis he that has best hit upon the Stile, which *Cicero* advises for History; *Genus orationis fuisse, & cum lenitate quadam aquabili profuens, sine judiciali asperitate & sententiarum forculatione prosequendum* Cic. de Orat. and 'twas this great Pattern that *Mariana*, *Paulus Aemilius*, *Paulus Jovius*, *Buchanan*, and all those who have been so happy as to outlive their own Age, have set before them for their Imitation. *Tacitus* is, by no means, so proper; his bright Sallies of Wit may be compar'd to Flashes of Lightning, which rather dazzle, than illuminate. *Paterculus* and *Florus* have, to their middle Way of Writing, joyn'd some little Air of Beauty, Delicacy, and Agreeableness. The Author of the *Augustan History*, as *Ammianus Marcellinus*, *Lampridius*, *Spartian*, *Julius Capitolinus*, *Vopiscus*, and others, have degenerated into a frigid and impure Stile, utterly estrang'd from the noble Simplicity of former Ages. *Salust* *Salustius* is great and sublime, and in that Character compared to *Thucydides* by *Quintilian*. *Quintus Curtius* is bright and florid. And upon these two Ways, which are almost the only Two that can rationally be follow'd, we may joyn Issue, and examine which of them is most suitable to the Genius of History; the most important Question that can be handled on this Subject.

tas, fuere pro cultu. Senec.

XI.

Verba ex-
cerptis Sa-
lustius, ex
Originibus
Catonis.
Suet.
Salustium
Scriptor
seriae &
severae o-
rationis.
A. Gell.

In a Point of this Consequence, which has never yet been fully decided, it may be enough to offer some Reasons that would, 'perhaps, facilitate the Decision. *Salust* has a Greatness in his Stile; but then he has some hard Expressions, which render him here and there dry and unpleasant; and this proceeded from his choosing to follow the old and rough Pattern of *Cato's Origines*, which gives his Discourse an Air of Seriousness inclining to Severity. On the contrary, nothing is more easy and polite than *Quintus Curtius*; his admirable Flower and Beauty of Expression, has very much charm'd the finest Wits. But the Question is, whether *Salust*, as rough as he appears, be not the most proper Model for History, since he gives such a Force, and Weight, and Grandour, to all that he says. Must it not be own'd, that he has his Beauties too? And is it not in this Rigour of Speech, that we find those fierce and terrible Graces which *Homer* has so well display'd in the Adventure of *Polyphemus*; and of which *Demetrius*, the Rhetorician, affirms him to have been the first Inventor; those Graces, I mean, which have nothing soft or womanish about them, but are Agreeable without an affected Tenderness? The same Critick has cited several Examples from *Xenophon*, to shew that he had the Art of rendering those Things pleasant, which seem'd in their Nature indispos'd for such a Character. And this it is, that properly constitutes the severe Stile, which *Hermogenes* prefers to the Sweet and Delicate, when he observes, that a plain Narration of Fact is often more forcible than

than a Discourse set off with Flourish and Ornament, because the former Stile may reach the Character of Greatness, whereas the latter can go no farther than to a bare Mediocrity.

'Tis with the same View, that among the Qualities of the noble and elevated Stile, he reckons good Sense, however negligently dress'd. This, he says, was the Character of *Corn. Pericles*, upon whose Model *Demosthenes* form'd his strong and vehement Eloquence. *Hyperides*, as he observes elsewhere, is negligent, but he is great; his Language is rude and dry, it has not much Flesh or Juice, but still 'tis noble and sublime. For this Severity of Stile (the true *Grecian* Character) is nothing else but an Exactness of good Sense, and a Soundness of Reason, which aims directly at what is solid, and does not amuse it self with what is shining; there is nothing false in its Conceptions; it is wholly taken up in pursuing a Sobriety of Discourse, such as always shews a great Understanding, and an equal Simplicity. 'Tis the same Stile that *Plutarch* ascribes to *Demosthenes*, and which *Dionysius Halicarnassus* has left undistinguish'd from the Sublime, or Grand. In short, 'tis this Force and Vigor of Expression, which alone can grace a Stile with that majestick Air, that renders it nervous and solid. 'Tis by this Advantage that *Cesar*, as plain as he is, has somewhat more noble in that Simplicity of Discourse, than *Tacitus* with all his Pomp of Words: And among the Negligences of the Ancients we may find somewhat to prefer to all the Politeness of the Moderns. Not but that the florid Stile may be of Use in petty Narrations, which cannot support themselves by their own

*Austerus
Gracâ
consuetu-
dine.*

Front.

*Artis seve-
ra si quis
amat effe-
ctus, men-
temque*

*magnis ap-
plicat, pri-
us more
frugalita-
tis lege*

*possit ex-
actâ. Pe-
tron.*

*Si juvenes
verba a-
troci stilo*

*effolient,
jam illa
grandis o-
ratio ha-*

*beret ma-
jestati: sue*

pondus.

Idem.

*Historica
locutio ubi
munditiem*

*retinuerit,
majora or-
namenta*

*non requi-
rit; sim-
plex, pura,
naturalis*

*fit, ut Ar-
istoteles*

quam siccitatem referre possit. Beni de Hist.

Weight.

Weight. The Princess of *Montpensier* ought to be written with all the Elegance, and the Colours of Art; but the History of the Wars of *Paris*, and of our late Troubles, will require a nobler Air: There should be a Softness and Delicacy in little Subjects, and a Force and Dignity in great. *Paterculus* may be gay and sparkling in his confin'd Character, but *Livy* must be grave and serious; for meaner Beauties must be dress'd before they shew themselves; while those of distinguish'd Excellence appear charming in their native Grace. Not to say, that Truth, which is the Soul of History, becomes suspected, when it is too much deck'd and adorn'd. Negligence has a much greater Air of Sincerity. This is what may be particularly observ'd, as to the Stile of History, according to the general Notions here laid down; but since the Practice of it depends upon Narration, let us consider how that may be perform'd to the best Advantage.

XII.

Historia est narratio rei gestae, per quam ea quae sunt dignoscuntur. Isid. Expositio praeteritorum temporum. Quint. History, being in Propriety of Speech, no more than a Recital of past Things, according to the Order in which they pass'd, it ought to be a perpetual uninterrupted Narration. And therefore nothing is more essential to it, than the Knack of telling a Story well, as nothing is more difficult. For what Art and Address must there be to detain and engage a Reader, who is always upon the Wing? What Wisdom to mingle through the whole Piece,

Custodia fidelis rerum gestarum. Liv. Dare orationi varios vultus; gaudent enim res varietate. Quint.

those

those Colours that give a Probability to Things, together with those Strokes, those Graces, that Vivacity, that Light, that Fire, which alone can hinder a Narration from growing cold and languid? What Dexterity for an Author, to expand his Genius and his Art in all that he says, and yet always to dissemble his Pains; and by an endless Variety of Expressions, of Figures, and of Thoughts, to adorn every Place that is capable, without ever making a Shew of Ornaments? What Sagacity, to know what should, and what should not be said; to speak, or to be silent; not to stay too long upon any Occurrence in the Way; to represent Things in Gross, or in Detail, according as Necessity or Decency require; to dilate or to contract an Account; to raise, by an Happiness of Expression, Things that seem less happy in themselves, and never to tire out the Reader by too uniform and constant a Pace? Lastly, what Judgment to distinguish with the exactest Care, that which is decent from that which is unbecoming? For, upon this principally turns all the Beauty of Narration, and all the Grace of History. A Narration is then perfect, when it has nothing superfluous. This, in one Word, is the Rule and Measure of its Excellence. The Precepts of *Cicero* and *Quintilian* amount to this; after whom I presume not to speak. Indeed, when the Superfluities are once retrench'd, when those useles Epithets, added only for Ostentation, and all those vain Ornaments of Language are discreetly lopt off, every Thing drives home, and flies swiftly to its proper Aim and Mark. Then the Vigour, and Strength, and Dignity, and all the other Advantages of Discourse support themselves with

Credit,

*Circumci-
sa exposi-
tio rei quæ
supervacu-
us caret.
Quint.*

Densus, brevis, semper instans sibi, concitatis affectibus
Thucydides Quint. Credit, and nothing is feeble or remiss. In this Respect *Thucydides* excels *Herodotus*; the latter being too loose and diffus'd in many Places, where he resigns himself up to the Beauty of his Imagination. *Salust's* Character is exact and concise; he is especially to be commended for his Swiftneſs and Rapidity of Language, which warms and animates his Style. *Cæſar's* Narration is admirable for Purity and Elegance, but it is not altogether so quick and lively; and he seems himself to want that Force, which he complain'd to be wanting in *Terence*. *Paterculus*, among the Confusions of the Civil War, acknowledges his own Stile to be improper for Narration, which ought to be familiar, easy, and unconstrain'd. *Livy* has the most engaging Art of relating Events, by the Manner of interweaving little Occurrences with great, in the Thread of his Narration; because the Great, if carried on to any Length, oppress and fatigue by demanding too sedulous Attention, while the Little afford a seasonable Entertainment and Relief. 'Tis by the same Art that he diversifies all his Adventures; that he keeps up an alternate Succession of what is mournful, and what is agreeable; that he manages his Shade and his Light with so judicious an Hand, as to keep the Reader in Spirit by the lovely Variety. For a Narration grows flat and tedious, if not enliven'd with different Incidents of Things, and new Figures of Speech. Besides, the Course of History ought here and there to be stop'd, and a Pause to be made at proper Intervals, as a Breathing-time for the Reader; and Care must be taken not to overcharge the Matter by too close an Union,

Thucydides verbis aptus & presus. Cic. Immortalem illam Salustii velocitatem consecutus Livius. Quint. Illa Salustiana brevitas, quâ nihil apud aures eruditus perfectius esse potest, capienda. Idem. Non recipit enarranda hic scripturæ modus. Paterc. Livius in narrando miræ jucunditatis, clarissimique candoris: ita dicuntur omnia, tum personis tum rebus accommodata. Quint.

and too immediate a Sequel of intricate and embarrassing Affairs. This is the Fault that *Dionysius Halicarnassensis* will have *Thucydides* to be guilty of in his third Book, where he so mixes the different Interests of the *Athenians*, the *Lacedaemonians*, and other States of *Greece*, as to create some Confusion by his indistinct Copiousness of Matter; the common Infirmary to which a rich and fertile Genius is expos'd. Though the Order of Time be most essential to all Narrations, as representing Things, according to the Series in which they were transacted, yet there's besides, an Order of Reason and Judgment in the Disposition of Events, which should be the peculiar Study of an Historian. 'Tis by this secret Order, that he must affect and interest his Reader; that he must let him into all his Views, and all his Thoughts, by making all his Persons act as their Temper and Character inclines them; by discovering their Manners, their Sentiments, their Designs, their Motives, their Operations, as they really stand in a necessary Dependence upon each other, and with so natural a Connexion, as to shewing nothing disproportion'd, and nothing out of its Place. He that ranges Things by this artful Method, so as to avoid all Confusion, is a great Master of History. This is what truly pleases, and not those strange and extraordinary Adventures which the Injudicious so eagerly hunt after. For nothing can be more delightful and charming than to see Men act in this beautiful Order: this alone, well drawn out and display'd, fills the Mind with entire Satisfaction. 'Tis here *Livy* has succeeded to admiration; because he has best follow'd this Order, carrying on the Thread of his Story by a Series of

Thucydides creber, rerum frequentia.
Cic.
Rerum ratio ordinem temporum desiderat.
Idem.
In rebus magnis memoriae dignis consilia primum, deinde acta, postea expectantur.
Idem.

Dis-

Discourse, and a Chain of Actions, always equal and always united. *Longinus* has observed, that *Thucydides* sometimes displaces the most regular Things, the better to surprize by this Disorder, and to vary his Relation; sometimes again, he recites past Things as present; and by bringing them actually upon the Stage, quickens the Attention, and raises the Affections of his Reader. The Genius of *Tacitus* is more for Flight and Sally, and such as disdains to be bounded within the Order of Things. His great Sense, shut up in a few Words, has not Compass enough to be proportion'd to the Spirit of his Readers, who are often oppress'd with its Weight: And then, being by no means natural in his Reports, and scarce ever growing cool and tractable, he does not perform the instructive Part as he ought. For instance, when upon Occasion of the *Papian* Law, he explains the Origin of Laws in general; and when in another Place he treats of the Laws of *Asylum's* or Sanctuaries, he never carries Things to their Fountain, or clears up their Bottom, or else he does it ill and falsely, as in his Account of the *Jewish* Religion, at the Beginning of the fifth Book of his History. And then his Stile is very deficient in Exactness and Propriety: No slight Fault in an Historian, whose principal Office is to teach and inform Mankind. But after all, a Narration, howsoever fram'd, is always truly good, when 'tis truly pleasing.

XIII.

The great Art of Narration, and one of its principal Beauties, consists in the Transitions. Indeed, those delicate and natural Turns, those gentle and happy Falls from one Subject to another, which render the Contexture of a Discourse so charming, those winning and insinuating Strokes, which lead on the Mind of the Reader from Object to Object, and without ever tiring him, shew him the Country as he passes along: In a Word, all that admirable Oeconomy of Transition, is the finest and most ingenious Part in a Narration, which instead of being easy and natural, will always seem forced without this Management. To succeed in which, a Man should not only be a *fine Speaker*, but he should be truly *Eloquent*; he should have the absolute Mastery of his Subject, and thoroughly comprehend its whole Chain and Dependance; for the most proper Transitions must rather be in the Things, than in the Words. And therefore those wide Excursions from Kingdom to Kingdom, from Nation to Nation, from Century to Century, without Method and without Management, are a gross Absurdity in any History that pretends to be regular; for here every Thing ought to be compact, and of a Piece; as in a great Palace we see nothing disjoynted, nothing out of Frame and Concert, but the Union of the Parts, and the Proportion they bear to each other, makes the chief Beauty of the Whole. For History is as a Body, compounded of its proper Members by a natural and vital Union. In which Regard the Book of Sanders the Jesuit, *De Schismate Anglicano*,
U among

*Xenophon-
tis fluens;
& sine sa-
lebris ora-
tio. Cic.*

among the Moderns is defective, as the Histories of *Florus* and *Paterculus* among the Ancients. Nothing can be more finely work'd up, nothing more sweetly flowing, than the Discourses of *Xenophon*. Yet *Livy* has, if possible, surpass'd him in this Excellence; his Narration is an admirable Chain of Events, and his Transitions arise from the Difference of Subject, rather than of Expression. *Salust* is not so close and compacted; and *Tacitus* much less; his Connections, if he has any, are forced, the Thread of his Story is broke in many Places, and this astonishes and confounds the Reader, who can't follow such an Author without being out of Breath. The most difficult Transitions are in the most common Subjects: For here the Lowness of the Matter must be rais'd and assisted by somewhat of Height in the Expression, and Ways and Means must be found out of uniting Things that seem disjunct from each other. And 'tis in these Places that an Author will have Occasion to exert all his Parts and Genius. The Mind of the Reader is too nice and delicate to be always turn'd which Way we please: And therefore the Turns that we actually give it, by leading it from one Adventure to another, ought to be prepar'd by secret Trains, and by all the Fineness of Address. Sometimes 'tis hurried along by unaccountable, and even contradictory Passions, that render it fierce and intractable. But what Art can be sufficient, so to vary these Transitions, (which ought not to resemble each other) as continually to present the Reader with a Sett of new Ideas, and never to bring the same Objects again in his View? 'Tis here the Industry of an Historian must be indefatigable; and in this consists
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the true Grace of Narration, which alone can render it sweet and attractive.

XIV.

As the Narration becomes agreeable by the Help of its Transitions, so it becomes probable by Means of its Circumstances. For nothing so much affects and interests a Reader, as a well-circumstantiated Fact, which being in it self dark and obscure, is illuminated by its Particulars, and by them rendered evident, sensible and palpable; nor is there any Way to make Men see and feel the Progress of great Enterprizes and important Affairs, but by unfolding them in the different Degrees of well-chosen Circumstances; for these furnish us with a greater Idea of Things, paint them more to the Life, give more Body to the whole Discourse, and more Soul to the Parts that compose it. And since this Art of representing the Truth in all its Dependencies, by unravelling the several Particulars, makes one of the chief Graces of History; it ought to be the Historian's great Concern, and his unwearied Study. The following Remarks may possibly assist him in it. The great Secret, then, is to know how to make a wise and judicious Choice of such Circumstances as are proper to enlarge and improve the Idea's of Things; to strike that Colour upon them which most easily attracts Belief, and to fix and engage the Mind by the Series and Management of the Specialties. A due Mixture of great and little Circumstances is effectual to this Purpose; for, if both are rightly chosen, and neither carried beyond Nature, the Great strike us with Admiration, and the Little af-

fect us with Delight. But tho' a Fact, if not rightly circumstantiated, is incapable of making a just Impression; yet all minute Particulars, all low and frivolous Descriptions, and such as debase a Subject, are carefully to be avoided: For an Author grows childish and ridiculous, if he descends to petty Recitals. As *Lucian* tells us of an impertinent Historian, who in the Account of a Fight, took care to give a very particular Description of the King of *Parthia's* Vestment, and the *Roman* Emperor's Buckler. Others (as that Critick goes on) amuse themselves with what is Foreign and Useless, without ever thinking of what's Necessary and Essential: As he, who after a Word or two spoken, *en passant*, of a great Battle, is carried away with the extravagant Adventures of a certain *Moorish* Knight. 'Tis thus *Procopius* in his secret History, forgets to cloath the most important Actions with their due Circumstances, and yet is nicely careful in dressing up those that are not material. Wherefore, in relating an Affair of Consequence, an Author must be able to give a just View of such Particulars as are most proper to raise and enlighten it, by distinguishing what is essential from that which is not. The most perfect Example that we have in History of a great Action, represented under all the Circumstances that are capable of giving it Weight and Strength, is the March of *Hannibal* into *Italy*, describ'd in the one and twentieth Book of *Livy*. This seems to me to be the most accomplish'd Draught of that great Master, and we meet with few Pieces of like Force and Vigour in all Antiquity. Never was a greater Enterprize conceiv'd by a more extraordinary Spirit; never was any executed with more

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Hardiness and invincible Resolution. For let us take a View of the Design : It was to transport an unwieldy Army from *Africa* to *Spain*, to scale the *Pyrenees*, to pass the *Rhone*, so vast, so rapid, at its Mouth, and so lin'd with Enemies round its Banks ; to cut a Passage through the then unpassable *Alps* ; to march over Precipices ; to dispute every Step with Parties and Ambuscades through perpetual Defiles, through Snow, Ice, Rain, and Torrents ; to challenge the Tempests and the Thunder, so frequent, so furious in those Mountains ; to combat Heaven, Earth, and the Elements ; to lead on an Army of an 100000 Men of different Nations, all envious and dissatisfied, at a Leader whose Courage they could not equal ; the Fright is in the Heart of all the Soldiery, while *Hannibal* alone remains sedate and compos'd ; the Danger that surrounds them on all Sides, distracts the Army, without once moving the General. The whole Piece is drawn in Circumstances of Terror : The Face of Danger is express'd in every Word : Never was there a more finish'd Picture in History ; never any that was touch'd with bolder Strokes, or stronger Colours. Another famous, though very different Instance, of a well-circumstantiated Adventure, is that of *Tacitus*, in the Feast with which the Empress *Messalina* regaled her Favourite-Gallant, *Caius Silius*. 'Tis the Description of a Vintage with all its Ceremonies, favour'd by the Season of the Year ; the Joy, the Pleasures, the Softness, the Luxury, the Impudence, the Intemperance, the Madness, and the Rant, are all painted with the most exquisite Delicacy : The Particulars are succinct and sensible, and told in the quickest and most lively Manner ;

and nothing could be more judiciously plac'd, than this Scene of extravagant Jollity, to render the following Death of *Messalina* more full of Tragedy and Horror. In a Word, there are some Circumstances that we may stile Happy or Fortunate, such as give a Grace to the whole Piece, in which they are imploy'd: there are others that may be term'd Agreeable, such as give a Brightness and Gaiety to the Whole: there are others more secret and curious, which enliven the Whole with a Pregnancy and peculiar Gust. Those that supply the best Ideas of Things, and are most capable of giving Instructions, deserve the Preference to all others. But there are some not Considerable enough to be of any good Use in Narration; especially, if they are too frequent and numerous; as in *Cesar*, who fails not to describe every Step and Movement in a Battel, so as to render the Account dry and crowded, and even troublesome. This indeed was his Principle, and perhaps it might serve the Design of the Author, but it contributes very little to the Pleasure of the Reader. *Livy* has an Art of selecting those peculiar Circumstances that afford Complacency and Delight. An Author must be first well acquainted with these Appendages of Fact, before he can use and manage them for his Occasions. Things, many times, improve by their Circumstances, and appear greater and nobler than they seem'd to be in themselves. If we would keep up the Appetite of the Reader, we should choose out those Circumstances that are, at once, pleasing and instructive. And here we should imitate *Davila* in his Story of the Civil Wars of *France*, whose very engaging Air results chiefly from his Talent of exactly

circum:

circumstantiating all Events. Too many Particulars oppress and fatigue the Mind; and therefore we should know how to separate those that are of Necessity or Importance, from those that are not. We must consult *Lucian*, in his Discourse of History, who is a great Master of this Secret. Above all, we must learn to sustain great and noble Circumstances with bolder and brighter Figures, (which is one of the Excellencies of *Livy*) so as to distinguish them by some more lively Colour, and to make them immediately strike the Eye. But still the Narration will not be compleat, unless to the Circumstances of Things we joyn the Motives of Actions; for the Motives, rightly touch'd, make it as fine and curious, as the Circumstances make it natural and probable.

XV.

To recite the Actions of Men without entering into their Motives, is not to compose a History, but a Gazette, which delivers the bare Events of Things, and does not trace them to their Source. *Cæsar* has been blam'd in this Regard, who barely tells us his Marches, his Encampments, and his Battles, omitting the Reasons upon which they were undertaken; and thus his whole Narration may seem too plain and lifeless, and to have more of the Body, than the Soul of Things: He may be properly said to write only Memoirs. But 'tis by the curious Display of the Motives upon which Men act, that History becomes nice and refin'd, and by which alone it supports it self, especially in Affairs of the greatest Consequence. It is but playing about the Surface of Things, to give a naked Relation of Fact,

without ascending to Causes and Principles.

Rerum ratio vult, ut quoniam in rebus magnis consilia primum, deinde acta, postea eventus expetantur, in rebus gestis declarari non solum quid actum, aut dictum sit, sed quomodo, & cum de eventu dicatur, causa explicentur omnes.
Cic. de Orat.
Ut non modo casus eventusque rerum, sed ratio etiam causaeque noscantur.
Tac. Ann. XIV.

“ Reason will (says *Tully*) that, as in Affairs, the Design precedes the Execution, so an Historian should give an Account, not of bare Events, but of the Grounds upon which they stand; and that in reporting what is done, he should explain how, and for what Reason it was done, *Tacitus* observes, (almost in the same Words) “ That it is the Business of History, not only to recount the final Issues of Things, but to discover their Rise and Original, and to touch upon their true Motives. ’Tis by this sole Excellence that an Historian may make himself considerable, and appear with Distinction and Figure: Nor is there any Part of a Narration so pregnant of Delight, as that which lays open the Heart of the Persons, and discloses all the important Secrets of their Counsels and Designs. And, as nothing can make an History more agreeable, so there is no celebrated Historian, but has attempted to signalize himself in this Character. For what can strike with so much Advantage on human Curiosity, as the letting us into Mens Breasts and Bosoms, and their obliging us with a Sight of those secret Springs, which put them upon most of their Adventures and Enterprizes? By thus recurring to the Fountain, we learn the true Genius of the Party that acts, we know the Spirit, and the Affections that guide him in acting; we discern what he is capable of, and by sounding his Intentions, we find Truth at the Bottom. And yet, how many Falsities have overspread the Field of History, under this fair Pretence? Into how many gross Mistakes have those Historians fallen, and still do fall, who are carried away with Injustice, Insincerity or Interest;

Interest; or such as giving themselves up to vain Conjecture, impose their own Speculations and visionary Schemes upon the Publick, as the Reasons of Actions? As for Instance, that *Pericles* rais'd the War in *Peloponnesus*, for the Love of the Courtesan *Aspasia*: That *Xerxes* march'd his prodigious Army into *Greece*, only to treat the Soldiers with *Figs*; that *Marc Antony* lost the Empire for no other Reason, but because he would not lose his Mistress *Cleopatra*: That *Francis* carried his Troops into *Italy*, for the sake of the fair *Milanese Clarice*. These are a very dangerous Sort of Authors, that pretend to an Art of Divination about Men's Thoughts; who say all they know, and all they do not know, for fear of not hitting upon the Truth. This is a great Default in *Davila*, whose Reasonings are otherwise very just and natural: But his Conjectures on the Motives of Fact, are very wide and erroneous, if we believe the Reports of our old Courtiers, who had the Opportunity of learning the Secrets from their Fathers. It must be still acknowledg'd, that an Action well laid open, and stript to its Causes, and a deep Counsel rightly sounded and fathom'd, give us a noble Idea of the Capacity of an Author, make him speak like a Man of true Reach, of exact Intelligence and Information, and compose one of the brightest Ornaments of Story. But then, whosoever attempts this conjectural Part, must set the strongest Guard upon his Prejudices of all Kinds: He must be alike deaf to Love and Hatred, that he may avoid that Artifice, and those Colours that we are wont to put upon Things, to make them suit with our own Inclinations, and favour the Side which we have espous'd:

Haud facile animus verum providet, ubi officunt odium, amicitia, ira, atque misericordia.
Cæs. apud Salust.

Plut. in
Herod.

espous'd: He must advance no false Hypothesis to support his Conjectures, and to bring Things to the Turn that he pleases to give them: He must neither diminish nor magnify; he must not strew Weeds and Poysons over every Page like *Tacitus*, nor Flowers and Sweets like *Paterculus*: For the last of these Authors is as grand a Flatterer, as the other is a Critick and Cenfor: He must not pervert and wrest Men's Intentions to a worse Sense, as *Herodotus* does, when he reports that the People of *Sparta* invited the *Persians* into *Greece*, as being unable either to resist, or to endure the Greatness of the *Athenians*. (For which he is censur'd by *Plutarch*.) Nor must he on the other Hand, excuse ill Actions under the Colour of good Intentions, as *Diodorus* observes of *Callias* the *Syracusan*, who justified all the Measures of his Patron and Benefactor *Agathocles*: The like Compliment *Paulus Jovius* has paid to *Cosmo de Medicis* among the Moderns. There is scarce any Historian, but has given himself a Loose this Way; because there is scarce any, that has had Resolution and Firmness enough, to bear up against his own Prepossessions. But tho' the *Motives* of Acting in great Persons ought, according to regular Course, to be finer and nobler than the *Actions* that follow; (because the Effect of the *Motives* depends upon themselves, whereas the Event of the *Actions* does not) yet, if we consider their ordinary Frame, we must not deny an Historian the Liberty of mixing, in their Counsels and Deliberations, somewhat of that Vanity and Weakness, to which they are alike subject with other Men. For the *Motives* which determine the Generality of Mankind, are very often impertinent and ridiculous:

as might be evinced by infinite Examples, were it proper for me to enlarge on this Topic. He must have a perfect Knowledge of the Vanity, Malice, Ignorance, and Folly of Man's Heart, which are (as 'twere) its settled Principles, 'ere he can be able to sound its Intention: And he must thoroughly apprehend its Weakness, which is the common Source of its Malice. He must know, that a Boldness of Enterprize, is a great Art in the Management of Affairs, which are often spoil'd by too cautious a Prudence and Circumspection. Above all, he must not be ignorant, that the Negligence of great Men in examining Things, and their Impatience in deciding them, are the Wheels upon which their main Conduct necessarily turns. These are the Persons that an Historian ought thoroughly to understand; because being the chief Actors upon the Stage of the World, Things run for the most Part, according to their Humour or Frolick. Not that an Author who has had once the good Fortune to reason justly upon these Principles, will always be able to do so. We have seen Historians in the present Age lose their Reputation, by the too great Itch they had of interposing their own Conjectures in all Events, and rather laying out themselves, than displaying their Subjects. As *Herrera*, for Instance, who would make us believe that the Duke of *Parma* did not put out all his Strength against the *Hollanders*, that he might manage them by Art and Policy. Nothing is more repugnant to the Spirit of an Historian, which ought to be strictly true and sincere, than these airy Notions; and all Reasonings that are founded upon bare Conjecture, are either impertinent, or at best uncertain.

certain. This is what we may observe, as to the Transitions, the Circumstances, and the Motives, in which the principal Artifice of a Narration consists. Let us proceed to consider the remaining Parts; such as the Figures, the Passions, the Descriptions, the Speeches, the Reflections, the Characters, the Digressions, and all that enters into the Oeconomy of historical Discourse.

XVI.

The only Service that Figures perform to History, is to warm and enliven it: An Orator, who designs to impose upon the Minds of his Hearers, scarce ever speaks without Figures, that he may the better play the Springs and Engines of his Art under this Convert: But an Historian who proposes only to instruct, should be more sparing in their Use. Nor can the Simplicity of an historical Stile, reconcile it self to this Varnish, and this artificial Air, which would injure its ingenuous Plainness and Freedom. *Lucian* is never more happy in his Critick, than when he opposes himself to these vain Embellishments of Eloquence, so improper for the Strictness of History, which if attir'd with too many of them, looks (as he says) *like Hercules in a Woman's Dress*; the last Expression of Indecency. Much less (as he adds) is it capable of those bright Strokes of the Poets, by which they smite the Heart, and raise the Soul, and disturb the Sense, and work all the Movements of the Passions. History, which is simple and natural, and which has no Design upon me, ought to leave my Heart free, that I may make an impartial Judgment of its Reports. Elo-

quence,

quence, and Art of Fallacy and Deceit, may rob me of my Liberty, and persuade me by Force: but History, which stands confin'd within the Limits of bare Instruction, cannot with any Decorum, make use of Figures otherwise than to Temper its natural Coldness, and to make it more pleasant and conversable. 'Tis thus, that *Herodotus*, *Thucydides*, and *Xenophon*, refresh the Spirit of their Readers: and if *Salust*, *Livy*, or *Mariana*, speak figuratively, 'tis never to put a Cheat upon the Publick. *Tacitus* is by no Means so scrupulous; he has the Air of one that would always dazzle and confound: The Hardiness of his Metaphors, and other Figures, over-strain his Expression. But *Cesar* seems to be in the other Extreme; while he follows a plain, naked Discourse without Figures, or any ornamental Advantage. A figur'd Expression, if made with true Art, may sometimes be more agreeable, than any proper Terms; because it gives more lively and pleasing Ideas to the Mind, and more strengthens and ennobles a Stile. Nay, there is a Boldness of Language, conducted by Wisdom and Judgment, which may be very allowable in Places that require more than ordinary Heat and Motion. But *Paterculus*'s Exclamation on the Death of *Cicero*, is over-violent; his Zeal has the Start of his Judgment, and supplies him with Figures which have too much Vehemence for the Stile of History: His Heat and Transport of Indignation seem to hurry him beyond his Character, tho' introduc'd with an Apology. Figures, if they would look well in an historical Work, must be chaste and modest; and must not suffer the Flights of Poetry, or the Grandour of Oratory: They must not

Cesar scriptis
Commentarios, qui nudi sunt, absque omni ornatu orationis.
Cic.
Nihil tam egisti Marce Antoni, (cogis enim excedere propositam formam operis erumpens indignatio) &c.

(says

(says *Lucian*) be sparkling, or nicely wrought and labour'd ; except in the Description of a Battel, where an Historian may hoist the Flag of Eloquence, if he does not, at the same time, put up too much Sail.

XVII.

The Passions are another great Beauty of Narration, if prudently mixt, and drawn with true Judgment. Indeed, they will not bear the same Degree of Heat, which they have in the Theatre : they are not play'd, but barely reported ; and therefore must appear with another Air. An Historian may give some Warmth to his Discourse ; but he must not himself be heated by it : He must therefore study human Nature to the Bottom, and unveil all those secret Motions of the Heart, which are excited by the several Passions, that he may represent them to the Life. This Part, rightly perform'd, will make a Narration more sweet and affecting. *Thucydides* has here the Advantage of *Herodotus* : The former, in the Judgment of *Dionysius Halicarnassens*, being the more eloquent and pathetick, tho' the latter is very often more gay and sprightly. *Hermogenes* proposes, as an admirable Model of a sweet, affectionate, and moving Narration, the Death of *Panthea*, Queen of *Susiana*, in the seventh Book of *Xenophon's Cyropedia*. 'Tis indeed one of the finest Places of that fine Author : every Thing is touch'd with all the Strokes of Tenderness and Pity. *Photius* highly commends *Josephus*, for his Art of moving the Passions. *Quintilian* maintains that *Livy* has excell'd all other Historians in this sweet and

Affectus, e-
os præcipue
qui dulci-
ores sunt,

nemo historicorum Livio magis commendavit. Quint.

deli-

delicate Manner of Painting the softer Affections: of which we have very lovely Instances, in the Rape of the *Sabine* Virgins, and those Female Stratagems by which they afterwards disarm'd their Fathers on the one Side, and their Husbands on the other: The Death of *Lucretia*, and the Publick exposing of her Body, to incense the People against the Family of the *Tarquins*: *Veturia*, in Tears at the Feet of her Son *Coriolanus*, beseeching him to raise the Siege of *Rome*: *Virginia* stab'd by the Hand of her own Father: The Consternation at *Rome*, after the Battle of *Canna*: with many other Pieces in this Work, express'd with the most compassionate Air, and in the most melting Language. And 'tis in this Author, that we are to study the Art of drawing the Passions such as they ought to appear in History: for he never raises his Temper, but when the Occasion justifies his Warmth. *Tacitus* has taken no Care to manage his Fire; and therefore he is always in a Flame: His over-vehement Phrase, and his unnatural Portraits hinder him from making a true and just Impression. I forbear to speak of other Historians, of whom the greatest Part have neither understood the Nature of the Affections, nor the Manner of applying to them. This is a very peculiar Rhetorick, requiring a Depth of good Sense, and an exact Knowledge of Morality. But, in general, if we desire a Narration should please, we must keep it from cooling upon our Hands, by discreetly throwing in these Ardencies and Emotions, by which Nature is wont to express herself.

XVIII.

The Affectation that most Historians betray in the Use of Descriptions, has brought them under some dis-repute with the Judicious. Nothing indeed is so childish as a light Description in a serious History. Young Authors are wont to set their Hearts upon these Ornaments, without considering whether they are decent and proper: Whereas they ought never to be applied, but with the greatest Caution, and all Strictness of Sobriety. The Rule is, to introduce them so far only as they serve to illustrate Things, that are essential to the main Subject. Of this exact Kind is the Description of the Island *Caprea*, in the fourth Book of *Tacitus's* Annals; upon which, *Tiberius* shut himself up in his Retirement towards the Close of his Life; it becomes necessary, and being concise, elegant, and beautiful, we may say, 'tis nicely as it ought to be. *Salust's* Description of the Field of Battel, in the Defeat of *Jugurtha* by *Metellus*, gives us a much clearer Notion of the Engagement: We see the undaunted Courage of the *Romans*, as well as the Experience and Conduct of the *Numidian* King, by the Advantage which the latter gain'd in possessing himself of the higher Ground: And the whole Action is much better display'd by this exact Draught of the Scene, which the Historian sets before our Eyes. Such likewise is the Description, in the twenty second Book of *Livy*, of the Post where *Hannibal* attack'd *Minutius*; which seems very artificially touch'd. The Situation of *Pella*, the Metropolis of *Macedon*, inserted in the 44th Book of the same Historian,

storian, after the Defeat of King *Perfes* by *Paulus Amylius*, is elegant, succinct, and apposite. Descriptions are allowable in larger Histories, to enliven the Narration, provided they are well placed, and not with that superfluity which attends them in the Works of young Authors, whose Desire of Sparkling in all they say, leads them into some very childish Extravagances. *Lucian* has adventured to find Fault with the long Description that *Thucydides* gives us of the Plague of *Athens* in his second Book: and perhaps not without Reason: For this Author, as wise as he is, seems to run into too many Particulars of that Calamity. But with much more Justice does the same Critick expose an impertinent Historian of his own Times, who was so fond of great Descriptions of Mountains, Cities, and Battels, *colder* (says he) *than all the Northern Ice and Snow*. This is the Censure of a very able Judge. And indeed, an affected Description is the most frigid Thing in Stile. The warlike Instruments describ'd by *Cesar* in his Commentaries, seem too minute and diffus'd, for so low and mechanical a Subject. One would imagine, that this great Man who had so well establish'd his Character of an accomplish'd General, was desirous to gain the farther Reputation of an excellent Engineer: There appears a Touch of Affectation, scarce consistent with his accurate Judgment. The Description of *Africa* in *Salust's Jugurthan War*, is likewise fill'd with too many Circumstances; much less would have serv'd to mark out the Boundaries of the two Kingdoms of *Atherbal* and *Jugurtha*, with which alone he was concern'd. What need of setting out the whole Country, and distinguishing the Manners of

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the

the People with so formal Particularity ? But that of *Macedon* in the 43th Book of *Livy*, after the Overthrow of *Perfes* by *Paulus Aemylius*, is more concise, and better proportion'd to the Subject. The like we have of the River *Peneus*, by the same Author in his 44th Book, deliver'd in a few Words, and admirably plac'd, to relieve the Fatigue of the March of the Roman Army against *Perfes* : That of the River *Enipeus*, a little before is no less exact, and no less happily introduc'd. Descriptions then must be necessary, they must be exact, succinct and elegant, never far-fetch'd, never harsh or violent, never such as shew the Author's Desire of displaying his Wit, rather than his Subject. All these Conditions they must have, 'ere they can be such as they ought to be, and such as are most of *Livy's*, who is the great Model to be propos'd, by such as would excel in this Part. The Account of the Death of *Cato* junior, in *Cesar's* War of *Africa*, seems to me too dry and barren, to be recommended to Imitation. The Historian should have given some extraordinary Stroke to the Character of this great Man, on this last and important Occasion : The Honour he had here done to his Enemy, would have reflected a Lustre on himself ; and so much Generosity and Vertue seems well to have deserv'd the Praise of him, that set the highest Value upon Courage and Greatness of Soul. *Appian* and *Plutarch* have recompens'd this Defect, by adorning the Story with all its splendid Circumstances ; which *Cesar* could not be ignorant of, being upon the Spot : For 'twas the Death of *Cato* that made him Master of *Utica*.

XIX.

I find the Opinions of great Masters divided upon this Point. *Herodotus*, *Thucydides*, *Xenophon* in *Sermo* and *Salust*, are those who have principally figuriz'd themselves by their Harangues; and *Thucydides* has of all been the most successful. The Discourses that he gives to the chief Persons in his Story, as *Pericles*, *Nicias*, *Alcibiades*, *Archidamus*, and to those whole States whom he introduces speaking by their Deputies, are so many admirable Lessons to the Orators of all Ages; and *Demosthenes* seems to have profited most in this School. *Polybius* is more upon the reserve: he does not make *Scipio* speak, tho' he had a very good Right to do so, being his constant Attendant in the Wars. But *Cesar*'s strictness is especially remarkable, who scarce inserts any Speeches, maintaining that they would be an Invasion upon the Truth of History; and therefore choosing to write Memoirs, for the greater Simplicity of Stile: Yet the Harangue of *Curio* to his Soldiers, in the second Book of the Civil Wars, encouraging them to attack *Varus* in his Intrenchments near *Utica*, is one of his longest and best. In *Dionysius Halicarnassæus* we have a long Exhortation of *Brutus* to the People; to animate them to revenge the Death of *Lucretia*: In the seventh Book of his History, the Speech of *Valerius* upon the Question of the best Form of Government, is protracted and tedious. *Josephus*, *Appian*, *Dion Cassius* and *Procopius*, are all great Speakers, as well as *Thucydides* and *Livy*: and all seem to have got this Art of Haranguing, from *Homer*. But, to say the Truth, if we examine these Discourses to the Bottom, especially those of Ge-

Trogus reprehendit in Livio & Salustio, quod conciones & orationes operi suo inferendo, Historiæ modum excesserunt. Justin. Livius & Thucydides interserunt conciones quæ nunquam ab iis quibus sunt attributæ cognitæ fuerunt. Scal. Poet

nerals to their Soldiers before an Action, we shall find but little of Nature, or Probability. *Trogus* censures *Salust* and *Livy*, for the immoderate Length of their Speeches. Indeed, there's an Air of Falshood in all Compositions of this Kind: For, whence were they taken? From what Originals were they transcrib'd? Besides, a Warrior seldom speaks in the Language of an accomplish'd Orator. And therefore the Panegyrick of *Pericles* on the Soldiers slain by the *Bæotians* is fictitious, in *Thucydides*; and so is that of *Cariline* to the Conspirators, in *Salust*, the Meeting being clandestine, and the Persons certainly unprovided. Thus the *Italian* Critick *Beni*, reasons against this Abuse. And *Thucydides*, who had an excellent Judgment, seems to have acknowledg'd thus much in his last Books, where he harangues less than in the first. But after all, the Thing it self is a Lesson of Nature; we cannot tell the least Story, but we must bring in the Parties concern'd, as speaking on the Occasion; and there's nothing more animates a Report, which is apt to grow cold by settling in one constant Tenour. So that there's a Medium to be observ'd in this Affair. A short Speech, made to the Purpose, by one of an eminent Character, agreeable to the Person, and the Subject, may have its proper Beauty, if set in its proper Place. But those formal Harangues at the Head of an Army, ready to engage, and those prolix Deliberations upon Affairs are now out of Use with the best Historians, who choose rather, to recapitulate, and report in general, and indirectly, the Sum of what has been spoken, after the Manner of the Ambassadors sent by *Romulus* to solicit Marriages with the neighbouring States, at the Beginning of *Livy*.

Most

Most of the Speeches in *Salust* are admirable, and commonly much to the Point. That of *Marius* must be own'd to be very fine: 'Tis one of the soundest moral Lectures upon Nobility; 'tis rational and judicious; and Antiquity has no Piece of this Kind, that's a more effectual Perswasive to Vertue; but still it seems to be out of its Place: Nor does the Air with which *Cato* and *Cesar* give their Judgment in the *Senate-House*, however great and noble, appear any way proportionable to the rest of the History. The long Discourse in *Dion's* 56th Book, upon the comparative Praise of Marriage and a single Life, is not of a Piece with the main Work. — The Speech of *Tiberius* to the *Senate*, about the restraining of Luxury, in the third Book of *Tacitus's* Annals, is exact and beautiful: never Historian made a Prince speak with greater Majesty. The Addresses of *Agrippa* and *Mecenas* to *Augustus*, one of them advising him to resign the Empire, the other to keep it, are admirable in *Dion Cassius*; but they are carried on to such a Length, as to take up the whole 52d Book. *Darius's* Speech before the Battle of *Arbela*, in the 4th Book of *Qu. Curtius*, as it is too prolix, so 'tis too elaborate, and too nicely finish'd; and seems only design'd to shew the Author's Parts: And such is that of the *Scythian* King's Ambassador, in the seventh Book, which has over much Elegance and Politeness, and savours very little of the Barbarian. There is another at the End of the sixth Book, in which *Philotas*, condemn'd to Death for conspiring against *Alexander*, speaks with so compos'd an Air, and in so florid a Strain, as if he were an unconcern'd Spectator of the Trial. I shall conclude this Article with subscribing to *Tut-*

ly's Opinion, who mentioning the Speeches of
De Thucy- *Thucydides*, says with great Wisdom and Mode-
dide, ora- sty, *I am wont to commend them; but I have neither*
tiones quas Ability, if I had Inclination, nor Inclination if I had
interposuit Ability, to imitate them. This is the best that can
laudare be said on the whole Matter. For after all, long
soleo; sed Harangues cannot avoid the Crime of being te-
imitari ne- dious. And therefore 'tis a pleasant Humour in
que possim *Boccaline*, to impose the Penance of reading over
si velim, a Speech in *Guicciardin*, upon one that had
neque ve- been guilty of the grand Indecency of perusing
sim si pos- a Madrigal with Spectacles.
sim, Cic.

XX.

The Portraits and Characters of Persons,
 are good embellishments in History, if accu-
 rately perform'd. But our Romances have
 corrupted our Genius in this respect; we
 make too many Pieces without the least resem-
 blance, and such as agree to no Body, because
 they agree to all the World. We take a Plea-
 sure in painting the Face and Mien of Persons,
 and those outward Features, which we have
 really nothing to do with. What shall I be the
 better for knowing whether *Hannibal* had a
 fine Sett of Teeth, provided his Historian ac-
 quaint me with the Greatness of his Genius; if
 he display to me an Hardiness and Restlessness
 of Spirit, a vast and enterprizing Thought, and
 a fearless Heart; and all these Qualities ani-
 mated with an irregular Ambition, and su-
 stain'd by a more than athletick Constitution;
 which is the Picture we have of him in *Livy*?
 In the same Manner, *Salust* gives me the most
 lively Notion of *Catiline*, in the Portrait he has
 drawn of him before his Story. When I see this
 bold Man determining with his Cabinet-Coun-
 cil,

Explicen-
tur homi-
nium ipso-
rum non
solum res
gesta, sed
vita ac na-
tura. Cic.

cil, to have recourse to Arms; when I see him going to the Senate, with such silence and privacy, as shew'd his Resolution of affronting the Consul; when I see him out-braveing the same Consul's Invective, in the full House; when I see him putting *Rome* into a Consternation, and making all *Italy* tremble; and, in a Word, daring to do what the most audacious of private Men never attempted: I am not surpriz'd with all this, when I reflect upon the Description above given. I see the Marks of a great Head-piece, of a subtle and projecting Wit; of a Man that moves and overturns all about him; and yet keeps himself undiscover'd, because he has made sure of his Party. *Pompey*, with the best Troops of the State, is at a distance, engaged in a very important and obstinate War: *Rome* is fill'd with disaffected Persons; the neighbouring Provinces abound with Murmuring and Discontent; the Deluge of reigning Vices, has put the whole Commonwealth into Confusion; and every Thing seems to favour *Catiline's* Design; because he chooses to execute it in so lucky a Juncture. 'Tis thus, that we may make a fair Guess at the Issue of the War between *Atherbal* and *Jugurtha*, when the same excellent Author has before-hand represented to us, the different Genius of the Rivals: 'Tis thus I know *Sylla* and *Marius* by their Pictures of his drawing; and that I discern, with Pleasure, all the great Actions of *Jugurtha*, who gave so much Trouble to the *Roman* State, flowing from that one Source which the Historian has open'd to me, in the Idea he gives me of the Courage and Capacity of that renowned General. This is the Way that the Ancients took, of inserting in their Histories, the Portraits of such Persons as they

they desired should appear with Eminence and Distinction; which cannot but be a noble Ornament, if atchiev'd with Success; for when once a Character is settled and confirm'd by these peculiar Strokes, and these essential Properties, all the Springs of Action work the better, and every Thing becomes more feasible in the Course of the *Narration*. But it will require a Master's Hand, to hit this resemblance; as consisting in those singular and imperceptible Traces, which alone can express Nature, and which we shall scarce ever find, but by searching deep into the Heart of Man, and by opening all its secret Folds, and stripping off every Part of its Disguize. And what Force of Genius, what penetrating Sagacity, will not be needful for this Operation? The chief Rules to be observ'd about it, are as follow. All the Pictures in History, ought to be real: In which regard *Xenophon* was faulty; whose *Cyrus* is but an imaginary Heroe, a Prince in Idea. They must be natural, and truly resembling, in which *Tacitus* is far from Exactness, who chooses rather to follow his own Temper, than to imitate Nature, and is more solicitous to make a fine Piece than a true One. If his Pictures are pleasing, he cares not whether they are like: And, with this View, he has drawn *Sejanus*, in the fourth Book of his *Annals*, a very different Man from what he was, if we may believe *Paterculus*. No Portraits should be admitted, but those of the greatest Persons, such as are principally interested, and have the chief Hand in Affairs; and therefore *Salust* might have left out the Character of *Sempronia*, who was but in-

adjutorem, virum severitatis latissima, hilaritatis prisce, nihil sibi vindicantem, eoque assequentem omnia. Paterc. l. 11.

*Tiberius
Caesar Se-
janum
Ælium
habuit la-
boris ac
fidei capa-
cissimum,
querum
adjutorem,*

directly

directly concern'd in *Cataline's* Conspiracy. Though we should not amuse our selves too much with describing Mens Persons, and drawing their outward Lineaments, yet this is very fit to be done on some Occasions, when it tends to the better Discovery of their Genius and Disposition of Soul. There are certainly a great many Ways and Manners of Painting, which have their different and respective Excellencies. *Livy*, when he is to describe *Lucretia*, so beautiful and charming in her Husband's Eyes, without speaking of her Face, represents her Vertue only, and in a Word or two, gives us the noblest Image we can conceive of an accomplish'd Lady: *They found Lucretia (says he) not at her Entertainments, or her Pleasures, but sitting at the Wheel with her Maids, and sharing in their Work.* *Tacitus* has drawn *Tiberius* only in his Actions, as the most lively Representation. *Lampridius* is fortunate enough in displaying the extravagant Humour of *Heliogabalus*, when he tells us, That he stifled some of his Parasites with Heaps of Roses and Violets, after a luxurious Banquet. *Procopius* has painted the Empress *Theodora* in her Gallantries and Intrigues. *Livy* has given us the true Image of a fierce and brutal Spirit, within the Compass of six Words. One mad Act of Gluttony and Barbarity in the Emperor *Wenceslaus*, presents us with his full Picture from the Hand of his own Historian, who reports him to have roasted his Cook for under-dressing his Meat. We can never have a more just Conception of the Stupidity of *Claudius*, than when *Tacitus* relates, that he discover'd neither Grief, nor Joy, nor any human Passion, at the Death of the Infamous *Messalina*. But the best Manner of Painting,

Lucretiam nocte serâ,

non in

convivio

luxuque,

sed dedi-

tam lana,

inter an-

cillas se-

dentem in-

veniant.

L. 1.

Oppressit in

tricliniis

parasitos

suos violis

& floribus,

sic ut ani-

mam aliqui

afflaverint.

In Heliog

Violentiam

in sitam in-

genio in-

temperan-

tia vini

accendebat.

L. 44.

ting, is to lay open those secret Motions of the Heart, which shew Persons such as they truly are, and which alone can give that distinguishing Air, that must support a Character, and demonstrate it to be an Original. All other Strokes are insignificant in a grave Relation of Fact, which can bear nothing that's Weak or Injudicious. Nor am I better pleas'd with those borrow'd Portraits, elaborately compos'd of several Pieces, as those which *Mariana* has patch'd up out of *Tacitus*; or as that of Count *Walstein* in *Sarazin*, which Copies from most of the finest Draughts of Antiquity. A Man should not amuse himself with a Copy, if he knows how to draw after Original Nature; and he must be well acquainted with the Person, before he can attempt the Piece. It must be allow'd, That *Paterculus* has some very singular and masterly Strokes in this Way; and that he had a Genius for fine Characters. After all, History it self is the truest Picture of Men, and their Character is best display'd by the Course and Sequel of their Actions.

X X I.

It may be of great Use to reason upon this Article, which makes all the Delicacy of History, if perform'd with a true and delicate Touch. But how many Wandrings, how many false Steps has an Author to avoid in this Way, in which he cannot proceed with too even and unaffected a Pace? *Xenophon*, *Polybius*, and *Tacitus*, quite exhaust themselves with their Reflections. *Thucydides*, *Salust*, and *Livy*, observe greater Moderation. What Side are we to choose, among so great Examples, whose Conduct is as different, as the Affair is important!

important? In general, whatsoever Beauties these Ornaments may be able to derive to History, there is no Part that requires a nicer Management. For to Moralize perpetually, and to turn all Adventures, great or small, without Distinction, into curious and politick Remarks, is to desert the Character of an Historian, who ought to give a Narration of Fact, without embarrassing Affairs with his own unseasonable Counsels. Besides, there is nothing more likely to corrupt, or at least to perplex the Truth, than these fine Thoughts, which are spun out of the Author's Brain, and which the Reader has not always Capacity enough to disentangle from the main Thread of the Story. 'Tis a Point of Wisdom, therefore, in an Author, not to abound so much in his own Sense, as to turn Philosopher indifferently upon all Occasions, which is the Fault that *Ammianus Marcellinus* runs into, through a mistaken Ambition of appearing learned. But *Livy* keeps on his Road without stopping; he tells us what he knows of the Matter of Fact, and leaves us to make the Reflections without anticipating us by his own; or if he interposes any, they are such as contain a great and noble Sense in a few Words; as that upon the Justice of Providence in the Crime and Punishment of *Appius*, who had corrupted *Virgi-* *Deos esse,*
nia. 'Tis a singular Talent in an Author, to *non negli-*
 be able to find constant Business for his Rea- *gere huma-*
 ders, by furnishing them with a ready Stock, *na; super-*
 that may imploy them in drawing Consequen- *bia & cru-*
 ces, and in giving such Turns to every Thing *delitati,*
 as he himself wishes they should. For every *et si seras,*
 Man desires to be free, in the Judgment he *non leves*
 makes of Facts represented to him, without be- *penas ve-*
 ing forestall'd; and the Use of this Freedom is *nire. L. 3.*
 one

*Curandum
ne senten-
tia emine-
ant extra
corpus ora-
tionis ex-
pressa.
Petron.*

one of the sweetest Pleasures in reading. If therefore, we design to please, we must cut off all these profound and abstracted Speculations; we must not study so refined a Policy in all that we say; we must have more Nature and Simplicity; we must speak the Truth without commenting upon it; if we have Strength of Genius enough to support so honourable an Undertaking. Above all, we must avoid those tedious common Places of the Mutability of Fortune, and the Inconstancy of human Affairs, which make the dead Weight of so many Books. We must have no Fondness for those big Terms, each of which would pass for a Sentence, and which serve only to emboss a Discourse. We must utterly renounce those Points and false Conceits, that Play and Jingle of Words, which are the Delight of puny Wits. If we mingle any Reflections with our Story, they must be such as arise naturally from the Subject, they must not be too fine, or too much studied; they must have less Brightness than Solidity, they must come nearer to the Reasoning of a wise Statesman, than to the Affectation of a Declaimer; they must not be too frequent, nor too loose and disjoynted, but must be enamell'd in the Body of the Work; they must never have that Air of a Rant, which gives so strong a Prejudice against an Author. *Paterculus, Tacitus, Machiavel, Paulus Jovius, Davila,* and the Generality of the *Italians* and *Spaniards*, have been excessive in this regard. *Cæsar* is more cautious; and his Reflections always appear with that Wisdom and Gravity, which are the Essentials of his Character: As for Instance, that in his second Book of the

Civil

Civil War. It is the common Infirmity of human Nature, that the most obscure and uncertain Events, are those upon which we fix our greatest Hopes, and our strongest Fears. Nor should a Writer attempt these curious Remarks of Politicks and Morality, unless he is perfectly acquainted with the Nature of Man, and fully comprehend all the Illusions of his Understanding, and all the weak Places of his Heart: 'Tis by this Knowledge chiefly, that great and excellent Historians distinguish themselves from those of ordinary Size; as *Plutarch* has done in his Lives of famous Men. *Salust*, with all his Simplicity, seems too earnest in inveighing against the corrupt Manners of his Time: He is always in a Passion with his Country, and always a Malecontent against the Government, and suggests a very ill Opinion of the Republick, by his frequent and bitter Censures of the Luxury of *Rome*. And tho' he says nothing but what's very true, yet this very severity is some Sort of Deviation from his first Character and Spirit. In the same Manner, *Davila* would not have so often plaid the Satyrist, if he had not sometimes forgotten the Part of the Historian. A thorough View of Morality is likewise necessary to the making just and apposite Reflections; for true Morality is the Ground and Rule of true Policy. In which respect the Politicks of *Tacitus* are often faulty, because his Morals are not just; either he gives other Men too much Corruption, or he has himself too little Simplicity; there is nothing of Nature in most of his Reflections, because there's nothing of Innocence: He impoysons every Subject, and gives the worst Turn to all Things that come under his Hands. And thus he has vitiated the Spirit of many Authors, who transcribe

Communi
natura vi-
tio fit, ut
latitanti-
bus & in-
cognitis
rebus ma-
gis confi-
damus, &
vehementi-
us exterre-
amur.

scribe this ill Quality from him, without being able to copy after him in others. This is what seems most material to be observ'd as to the Use of historical Reflections. A sententious Word or two may be very fitly put into the Mouth of a Person, whose Character will justify the Speaking of Sentences. *Mariana* and *Strada* seem to have been no very good Managers of this Part. Nor are we much charm'd with those Authors of compos'd and formal Stiffness, who never relax, and who, to give a Shew of deep Concernment and great Weight to all they say, multiply Sentence upon Sentence, Reflection upon Reflection, and are so ridiculously Solemn as to assume the Gravity of Judges, in the Cognizance of Trifles. Too subtle a Refinement of these Thoughts is apt to degenerate into a false Delicacy; and Reflections are never so good and proper, as when they have least of all the Air of Reflections. Such are those of *Cesar*. To instance in one of them: This great Man having driven *Afranius* and *Petreius*, *Pompey's* two Lieutenants in *Spain*, to Extremities, and being unwilling farther to expose his Troops, took the Way of starving them out, without the Hazard of another Engagement, upon this Principle,

Cum imperatoris non minus sit, prudentiâ superare quam gladio. De Bell. Civ. 1.

That 'tis no less the Part of a General, to Conquer by his Wisdom, than by his Arms.

XXII.

Digressions in History cannot always be Ornamental; there are Rules to be observ'd in using them; whenever they deform, or disconcert a Work, they turn into downright Faults. Yet have they their proper Grace, if made with Judgment, and not too wide and foreign, or hanging too loose from the Subject;

ject; for they give that Variety to a Narration, which is necessary for the rendering it agreeable. But they must be thrown in with a very artful Hand, and the Approaches must be made with so much Preparation and Address, that how different soever Things are in themselves, their difference shall always be conceal'd under their Union. An Author is in danger of going astray, if he take but one Step out of the main Road; and unless he happen to have a very strong and steady Head, he is insensibly betray'd to Change. But thus to rove from one Subject in quest of new Discoveries, for the sake of enlarging the Reader's Prospect, and presenting him with a wider Landskip as he passes along, is not to act the Historian but the Adventurer, who is busie in filling his Narrative with all that occurs in his Travels. Such an Author is always taking Towns, and fighting Battles; always upon Action and Enterprize, like *Herodotus*, who too frequently launches out, and very often in strain'd and unnatural Digressions. In this Art, he endeavour'd to imitate *Homer*, who is a much greater Master of it: For if ever the Poet soars above his ordinary Field, he yet flies directly to his Mark, without hovering at a distance, and never goes out of his Way, but he leaves the Passage open for his Return. *Thucydides* is more regular than *Herodotus*; and generally keeps within the strict Bounds of his Subject. The greatest Liberty he has taken, seems to be in the Conspiracy of *Harmodius* and *Aristogiton*, in his sixth Book. *Xenophon*, who propos'd him for his Pattern, sometimes takes a Loose, as in the Adventure of *Panthea*, in the fifth Book of his *Institution of Cyrus*. Indeed this Adventure has a natural

Con-

Connexion with the Body of his Story; that Princess having been taken by *Cyrus*, in his defeat of the *Assyrians*, and her Husband *Abraham* having, on that Occasion, embraced *Cyrus's* Party, and acted as one of his Generals. But I would not be responsible for some Digressions of this excellent Author, which have not so strict an Alliance with the Purport of his History, or his other Works. *Polybius* has frequent Digressions upon Policy, upon the Art of Wars, and upon the Laws of History, which might possibly have been spared. *Salust* is now and then guilty of the same Fault: and therefore a modern Critick has joyn'd them both in the same Censure. *Phrynus* highly commends the Digression of *Dionysius Halicarnassæus*, in his seventh Book, which describes the Course of *Aristodemus's* Tyranny. That of *Cæsar* in his *Alexandrian* War, upon the Commotions of *Longinus*, I have always look'd upon as too particular, and somewhat remote from his Design. The Question about the *Phoenix*, manag'd by *Tacitus*, in the sixth Book of his Annals, upon Occasion of a Report in *Rome*, that a *Phoenix* had been seen in *Egypt*, under the Reign of *Tiberius*, seems to come up to the Rules of a just Digression. The various Opinions of the Naturalists about this Bird are fairly represented, its Qualities and Figure describ'd; and all in a few Lines. Such a Piece, well placed, is a great Improvement to a Narration; it relieves the Mind of the Reader, and sets a new Edge on his Curiosity. That Air of Greatness which is observable in *Mariana*, seems in a good Measure owing to the Art he has of bringing in, by Way of Digression, all the considerable Events of the World, all that is wonderful in the fabulous Ages, all that

Polybius &
Salustius
ita peccarunt, ut nullam unquam veniam impetrarint, dum digrediuntur.
Ex *Sebast. Mac.*

that is remarkable in *Greece*, in *Sicily*, or in the *Roman* Empire; the particular Memoirs of the *Carthaginian* State, not to be found with more Advantage in any Author; the famous Sieges of *Saguntum* and *Numantium*; *Hannibal's* March into *Italy*; the Succession of the Emperors; the Rise and Birth of Christianity, and the Preaching of the Gospel; the Conquest of the *Moors*, with many the like Strokes, which carry in them a peculiar Force and Dignity. This Author's Genius is wholly compos'd of great Things; all which, by some secret Tye and Dependance, are connected with the History of *Spain*. And in this, never did Historian reflect so much Honour on his native Country; by thus artfully referring to it all the great Actions and memorable Events, that have pass'd upon Earth. But because there are few Capacities strong enough to follow an uninterrupted Thread of Story with the same Breath and Vigour, and to shut themselves within the Bounds of a single Subject; there are few Historians who do not forget themselves upon some Occasions, and instead of making a Digression, begin a new Work. I shall not trouble my self to produce Instances of this Case; the World is full of them, nor is there any Endowment more rare and singular, than that Exactness of good Sense, which knows how to keep close to one Design, and to fix upon one View. I shall only observe, that *Livy* has happily avoided these idle Wandrings from his principal Matter, which he tells us, he industriously declin'd through the Course of his Work, as arguing a considerable Defect of Judgment. And yet, how many of our modern Dealers in History have run into the same ridiculous Humour that *Lucian* exposes in his contemporary Writers of the *Parthian*

Y

thian Wars, who diluted their main Narration with mere Follies and Extravagances, to make it the more palatable; and so leapt from one Age, one Country, one Adventure to another, without Sense or Consideration? It must therefore be establish'd as a certain and indispensable Rule, that all Digressions should have some Hold whereby to connect them to the principal Subject, which is so well observ'd by the judicious Historian but now mention'd: It must be nicely examin'd, whether they are in their Nature inconsistent or incompatible with the Story; for if so, they can never be admitted with Propriety, the most essential Mark of a just Digression being the Relation it bears to the chief Design: And thus, the great Secret is, to know precisely how far it may go, and where its natural Boundaries are fixt, which it ought not to pass. What makes the adjusting of this Measure to be so very hard a Task, is, that the Extent of a Digression should not always be the same, but proportionably greater, or less, as it is more nearly, or remotely, allied to the capital Point of Story: And this nice Discernment has been the Rock upon which most Authors have split. For there are very few, not to except those of the greatest Talents, who, when they engage themselves in Digressions, have not sometimes exceeded the just Limits: It being so very difficult for them to contain, and manage their Spirit, so as always to stop and turn at the right Mark. And here *Mariana* himself is not without Blame, when he takes so wide a Compass at the Entrance of his History: I think this Conduct requir'd a large Apology, and I presume not to defend it. But *Livy* is the great Model here to be propos'd, who cannot step out of the *Roman* Story,

Story, to give his Judgment as to the Success of Alexander's Arms, in case they had been turn'd against Italy, without taking the wisest Precautions, and using a great many fine Excuses to prepare and dispose the Mind of his Readers; and yet his Debate and Arguments upon this View, are extremely curious, and by no means out of the Body of his Work. In brief, and to conclude this Part, Digressions are the proper Business of an Historian's Wisdom; this is the only Guide he should follow in them, without consulting his Imagination or his Wit.

*Nihil minus quasi-
tum a prin-
cipio hujus
operis,
quam ut
plus justo
ab rerum
ordine de-
clinarem,
varietati-
busque di-
stinguendo
opera, le-
gentibusq;
veluti di-
verticula*

quererem. L. IX.

Statui non attingere externa, nisi qua Romanis coherere rebus.
L. XXXIX.

Ut querere libeat qui eventus Romanis rebus, si cum Alexandro foret bellatum, futurum fuerit. L. IX.

XXIII.

History must be eloquent, for fear of proving tedious; and in this especially its great Artifice is to be display'd. But here its principal Concern should be, to deliver no Truth without the just Lineament and native Face of Truth, so as to ensure its Credit in Things that seem less probable, and less obvious to Belief. Such an Eloquence, as knows how to give Things that peculiar Turn which facilitates their Admittance, ought to be imploy'd in this Service; and its great Work will be to range Matters in that admirable Order, which produces the Grace and Air of Probability. The Materials come to an Historian from other Hands, and are supplied by the Memoirs and Collections that lie before him; 'tis his Part to dispose, to regulate, and inform the rude Mass; and, to do this with

Success, he must not barely consider the Things said, but especially regard the Manner of saying them; for in this, as in other Parts of Eloquence, all turns upon the Manner. This is the proper Use that an Historian should make of Eloquence, which alone has the Power of setting all Things in their due Place, whence they may exert their proper and regular Effects. *Thucydides* is admirable for this Art, in which he has surpass'd all Historians, in the Judgment of *Cicero*. *Quintilian* never speaks of the Eloquence of *Livy*, without Delight and Admiration. And 'tis chiefly by this noble Gift, that those two great Men have distinguish'd themselves from the rest of their Tribe: For 'tis Eloquence that must enable Men to explain themselves with Advantage. The best Speaker always persuades, and 'tis the Art of Persuasion that strikes into Things those Colours of Truth that arise from the Light in which they are set, and the Grace with which they are adorn'd. Thus, nothing can be more Eloquent, than the Account which *Salust* gives us of the State of *Rome*, at the Time when *Catiline* form'd his Conspiracy. And when the same admirable Author represents the Commonwealth, as corrupted by Avarice, and Luxury, and oppress'd with its own Weight; these are so many Strokes of the most exquisite Eloquence that History affords. 'Tis in these noble Images that a Man must shew his Art, if he has any; and with these the Historians of the first Magnitude have enrich'd their Labours. 'Tis this Kind of Eloquence that should be thrown into the Body of History, to animate it with its Spirit and its Flame: All is languid without this Principle of Motion; and without these various Turns that must be given to a Narrative, to render it pleasing. All that Artifice of Transition, all those

Thucydides omnes discendi artificis vincit. Cic. Quintilian de Orat. Tito Livio miræ facundie viro. Quint. Livium supra quam dici potest eloquentem. Idem. Livius eloquentiæ & fidei præclarus imprimis. Tac.

tender

tender and passionate Movements that affect the Heart, all the curious Chain and Series of memorable Events, all the Disposition of Circumstances, and all the bright Strictures that excite Admiration, are the Effects of this singular Eloquence, proper to History, which ought thus to rise and take its Flight, when justified by the Occasion. But to distinguish the true Place of doing this, requires the utmost Sagacity, and the greatest Reach of an Author. Among the *Greeks* and *Romans*, there reign'd, some time, a Kind of haranguing Eloquence, which was pure Ostentation, and propos'd rather to surprize than to instruct; rather to lay out the Parts of the Historian, than represent the Truth of the History. This Way is out of Fashion with the more Judicious of the Moderns; because it seems affected; *Salustius* and because a true Taste can relish nothing but in bello what's natural. *Salust's* Introductions, though *jugurthino* very sensible, and very eloquent Discourses, yet *& Catilinario, nihil* appear to me to fall under the Character of Common Places, foreign to his Story. Perhaps that *ad histori-* fine Author had always some Pieces, ready pre-*am perti-* par'd, lying by him, for occasional Use; as *Tully* *mentibus* assures us of himself, that he had a whole Volume *principiis* of Prefaces at hand for his Service. I should not *est usus.* have suspected *Tully* of this Sort of Caution and *Quint.* good Husbandry, but that he makes his Boast of *Habeo vo-* it to his Friend. It may possibly be Prudence in *lumen pro-* an Orator, who is to speak often in Publick, and *æmiorum;* has not always Time to prepare himself; but it *ex eo eli-* seems hardly tolerable in an Historian, who is *gere soleo,* Master of himself, and of his Leisure. For these *cum ali-* Compositions, however fine in themselves, yet *quod σύ-* cease to be so, when they are out of their Place, *γραμμά-* and when they have an Air of Affectation. Thus *institut.* much may be observ'd, as to the Eloquence of *ad Attic.* History.

XXIV.

There are still behind some other Beauties proper to be inserted into History, to raise and enliven it, when it grows languid, or when it runs into long Recitals, too near of Kin to one another. But among these Beauties, such as are most conspicuous are not always the most effectual. Things that sparkle too much, are very often counterfeit. The Mind of the Reader, which has its proper Bounds, does not love to be oppress'd with Pomp and Shew; and therefore a judicious Historian will so manage these Beauties, as not to be lavish of them, or to let them grow too cheap; and will accommodate himself to the Capacity of human Nature, which is dazzled with too much Light, and rather confounded, than entertain'd with a Crowd of Ornament. There are secret Excellencies, which tho' they escape vulgar Discovery, yet are observ'd, and admir'd by the Curious; as affording a continual Succession of new Graces, more strong and durable than those which appear so brilliant to the Eye. These Graces are the Result of some surprizing Turn of Eloquence or Wit, which being artfully dispos'd, fails not to produce an unforeseen and wonderful Effect. To give some Instances; *Porfenna* King of *Clustum* lays close Siege to Rome: *Cajus Mutius*, animated by the pressing Danger of his Country, ventures into the Enemies Camp, with a Design upon *Porfenna's* Person, and actually kills his Secretary by his Side, whom he mistook for his Master. The Assassin is laid hold on: The King commands a Pan of Coals to be brought, that the Torture of the Fire might enforce him to a Confession of his Accomplices.

The

The young Man full of Spirit and Courage, thrusts his Hand into the Burning-Coals; and without changing his Countenance, lets it be wholly consum'd, and then directing his Speech to the King; *Behold,* says he, *how contemptible a Thing is Life, to Men inspired with Glory!* These Words pronounced with an undaunted Tone, quite changed the Scene of Things: The Murderer, howsoever hated and detested, strikes Astonishment into his Enemies; and they who stood ready to see him expire in the Midst of Torments, now look upon him with Veneration, and send him home with a Panegyrick. This Revolution is brought about by one Sentence, and that one Sentence thus beautifully plac'd, is a great Ornament to the History, and of wonderful Operation in the Event. Thus again, when *Fabius* had retaken *Tarentum*, *Hannibal*, tho' defeated, expresses his Misfortune, with the Air of a Conqueror, and makes his Enemies Praise turn upon his own: *Nor are the Romans* (says he) *without their Hannibal.* A very haughty Way of Submission, and suitable to the Fierceness of the Speaker. These Strokes are frequent in *Livy*. Nothing gives us a greater Idea of the Persons that speak, than when they speak well; nor of the Authors that make them speak, than when they speak to the Purpose. *Paterculus* in the final Overthrow of *Pompey* by *Cesar*, to express the Obstinacy of the Action between *Romans* and *Romans*, says, *the Conquerors were more willing to give Quarter, than the Conquer'd were to receive it.* We have an Example of a different Manner in *Tacitus*. At the infamous *Regale*, that *Messalina* made for her Gallant, or new Husband, in the heat of the Extravagance; one *Vestius Valens* happen'd, in a Frolick, to leap up into a Tree, and being ask'd what he spied from his Observatory,

*Sentias
quàm vile
corpus sit
is qui
magnam
gloriam
vident.*
Liv. l. 2.

*Et Romani
suum
habent
Hannibalem.* L. XXVII.

Cum libentius vitam videret dare quam accipere.

*I see a Storm, says he, rising from the Side of Ostia. This Word, (dropt without the least Design,) struck a Damp upon the Company, being a Pre-
 sage of the Emperor's Return, who soon after came from that Side; and upon his Arrival, order'd the Execution of the vile and miserable Empress. Paterculus's Remark upon the Death of Pompey, basely assassinated by the Perfidiousness of King Ptolemy of Egypt, has somewhat of Greatness in it, and well becomes that Place of the Story which wanted such a Light and Grace: So various (says he) was the Fortune of that great Man, that he who but lately wanted Earth for the Extension of his Victories, now wanted it for the Dimensions of his Grave. The Thought is beautiful, but rather too much refin'd, according to the Manner of this Author. We meet with two Sayings in Caesar, that re-kindle the Flames of the Civil War; when upon the Point of being extinguish'd. The Army of Pompey was drawn up, on the Bank of the River *Apfus*, at the Entrance into *Macedon*: Caesar, who was posted with his Troops, on the other Side of the River, sends to Pompey with Propositions of Peace; to which Pompey's Reply is, *What Pleasure could I receive from Life or Liberty, if both must come through Caesar's Hand?* And that of his General *Labienus*; *No Peace without the Head of your Master.* These two Speeches give quite another Turn to Affairs, and cut off all Hopes of an Accommodation. *Paterculus*, to enliven the melancholy Story of the Proscription by the *Triumviri*, throws in a very pleasant Piece of Raillery, which he makes to be spoken by the Soldiers, as they follow'd the triumphal Chariot of *Lepidus* and *Plancus*: *Our Consuls triumph, not over the Gauls, but over the Germans; not de Gallis duo triumphant Consules.* L. II.*

In tantum in illo viro discordante fortuna, ut cui modo ad victoriam terra defuerat, deesset ad sepulturam. L. II.

Quid mihi vita & civitate opus est, quam beneficium Caesaris habeo? L. III. de B. C. *Nobis nisi Caesaris capite relata, pax esse nulla potest.* ib. *De Germanis, non de Gallis duo triumphant Consules.* L. II.

Germans;

Germans; as having consented to the Banishment of their nearest Relations. Such Strictures as these, as they are surprizing in themselves, so they are very fortunate in History, and have a wonderful Effect in relieving the Spirit, and raising the Attention. There are a thousand other Arts, that an Historian may have, to animate and brighten his Work, besides these which I have touch'd; and I pretend not to collect all the fine Examples in this Way. It may be sufficient, farther to remark, that whatever Incident may put a new Face on Things, whatever may supply new Conjectures, insinuate new Sentiments, or Ideas; in a Word, all those delicate Touches, which are capable of making any Kind of Revolution in the Mind of the Reader, by Inspiring him with other Actions or Motions, as they have always a true and natural Beauty, so they are always to the Purpose. The great Point is, to dispose them in such a Manner, that they shall seem so essentially interwoven with the Narration, as to be capable of producing their just Effects; that is, of brightning and enlivening a Subject which in itself might appear less agreeable.

XXV.

There are Sentiments which might look very well in a dramatick Writer, and yet would be unbecoming an Historian; because Poetry represents Things as they ought to be; but History as they really are. And therefore Historians, that furnish their Heroes with such exquisite Notions, are not always the most Judicious; and whatever is not founded upon Judgment and good Sense, tho' it may make a fine Shew, yet can have no real Goodness. Thus *Quintus Curtius* is not so just as might be wish'd in his Conduct, while his Character of *Alexander* is strain'd up to such

a Pitch of Gallantry and Wonder. His Heroe does not always take the wisest Part; but he takes the bravest, and the most adventurous. He appears charm'd with Danger, and loves Conquest less than the Glory of Conquering. He has an Opportunity of falling upon *Darius* in the Night, and thus of disguizing his Weakness, the *Persian Army* being double the Number of his own: But he, not so much concern'd to defeat his Enemies, as to raise an Admiration of his Courage, attacks them in broad Day-light, and resolves rather to die with Honour, than to overcome by Surprise. *Darius*, being worsted in the Field, offers him his own Daughter in Marriage, and half *Asia* with Her. *Alexander*, more desirous of Courting Glory in the Ways of Danger; than of reigning and triumphing in Peace, rejects the Proposal, and on this, as on every Occasion, never does any Thing but what is extraordinary. All this is very glorious indeed: But might not a little Probability do well, to intermix with so much Glory? Is not the Heroe's Rashness superior, not only to his Prudence, but even to his Ambition? No doubt the Author pleas'd himself with these fine Conceits; but at the same time, by neglecting to manage the probable Part, he has left it doubtful, whether we are to call his Work a History, or a Romance. Of such high Importance it is for a Writer always to guide his Sentiments by Truth and Reason, and to follow the Nature of Things, in Preference to his own Invention or Wit. *Paterculus* has supplied *Tiberius* with much wiser and juster Principles; telling us that he never thought any Opportunity so advantageous as to recompense the

Imperatori nunquam adeo ulla opportuna visa est occasio quam damno amissi militis pensaret, semperque ei visum est gloriosum quod esset tutissimum, aut conscientiae quam famae consulens. L. II.

Loss or Hazard of his Troops; always esteeming that to be most glorious, which was most safe, and consulting his Conscience before his Reputation. Let not History therefore prostitute itself, to authorize that Madness of false Glory, which carries vain and ambitious Spirits into so many Disorders, while they run headlong after mistaken Honour, and pursue Fame in the Dark. Let not a Man of Sense and Wisdom be dress'd up in the Notions of a *Paladin*, nor a true Knight, dubb'd with the Quality of a romantick Adventurer. Great Persons are too apt to form an Idea of Glory by the Standard of their own Vanity or Imagination. But the Interest of the Publick ought to be much dearer to a Governour, than his private Fame and Renown; and the true Honour of a mighty Prince is to make himself belov'd, rather than fear'd. These ought to be leading Principles in History, which will render it a Lecture of Clemency to Princes, and of Reason and good Sense to all Mankind. An Historian then, must guard against Errors and Misconception; he must know first of all, how to distinguish true Honour from false, in the Conduct of Life; so as never to commend, but where Praise is justly due. Instead of being himself a Slave to popular Opinions, he must make it his Business to undeceive the People; he must never suffer them to judge of Things merely by the Event, but must carry them to the Source, and give them a View of the first Springs and Motions. He must take Care to do Justice to good and evil Deserts, that he may not impose upon Posterity, which commonly takes a Report upon Trust, and adheres strictly to the Letter of an Author. He must never relate a grand Event, without declaring the Causes, and discovering the Master-wheels that set

set it on Work? 'Tis possible indeed, that there may be very little, or nothing, at the Bottom: But still we take a peculiar Delight, to see great Effects result from little Beginnings: As, *Dionysius Halicarnassæus* observes in the first Book of his History, upon Occasion of the Overthrow of regal Government in *Rome*, produc'd by the younger *Tarquin's* Insolence, and his Father's Pride. This seems to be the Spirit that ought to reign in History, and these the Maxims that ought to govern an Historian. Let us next consider what Sort of Genius is most suitable to his Province.

XXVI.

Nothing considerable can be atchiev'd in History without a Genius: 'Tis that do's all in this as in other Arts; and thence only proceeds the different Character of Writers. A little Genius will render a great Subject little: And a great Genius will render a little Subject great. He that would succeed in History, must have an extended and universal Spirit, capable of great Ideas, qualified to furnish out a noble Plan, and conceive a vast Design. "A Good History," says *Cicero*, is a great and important Task, not to be accomplish'd but by the sublimest Powers of Eloquence." When I find *Lucian*, one of the brightest Wits of his own Age, (so fertile in great Men,) declaring that he had too weak a Genius to attempt History, and to give it the Perfection it demands; I am startled at the Acknowledgement, and raise my former Notions of the Difficulty of the Labour. For, if this Author, who is so excellent in all his Compositions, and who has given Rules for the Writing of History that are so admirable, and so full of good Sense, yet confesses himself unable to support the Weight of such an Undertaking;

*Arduum
videtur res
gestas scri-
bere, quod
facta distis
exæquanda
sunt.
Salust.
Magnum
quid histo-
riam rectè
scribere,
& summi
oratoris
proprium.
Cic. de
Orat.*

taking; what shall we say of those Mushrome Historians, that spring up in a Night, without being acquainted with the very Essentials of their Art? He tells us, the *Armenian War*, in his Time, brought forth a numerous Progeny of such Authors, all Men being thence infected with the Itch of Writing. "But Things will not be carried, says he, in this Manner: There's no Toil more difficult and severe, than his, that like *Thucydides*, would write for Eternity." For what Force of Genius will it require to deliver the naked Truth, without those paraphrastic Dresses, and that Disguize which is put upon it by some Authors, who have not a Soul great enough to maintain Simplicity, and to represent Things as they are? What Strength, and Courage, to pluck off the Mask of Vice, so advantageously conceal'd, under the Arts of Dissimulation? What Sagacity, to discover the Temper and the very Soul of the Persons that act; without trifling about the Picture of their Outside, which is seldom of any Importance, or Use? What true Sense, and just Discernment, to fix the distinguishing Characters of whole Nations, or Ages? As for Instance: In the Story of the Civil Wars of *Rome*, not to confound the Genius of the Monarchy with that of the Commonwealth, the Dependance of the one, with the Independency of the other: In the Annals of *France*, not to dress up the Age of *Lewis XI*, when Superstition abounded, in the Manners of the Age of *Lewis XIV*, which can by no means be charg'd with Superstition: Not to describe *Charlemagne*, like *Henry III*: But to set the peculiar and essential Marks of Distinction on all Persons and Times. What Equity must there be, to allot a just Retribution to Virtue and Vice, to distinguish Merits, and to weigh

weigh the Actions of Men, without putting their Persons into the Scale? What Judgment, always to make the fairest Construction of Things, and to take them in their best Sense; constantly to aim at that which is of most solid Use; so to interpose one's Opinion in Business, as never to prejudice, or put a Constraint upon the Reader: Not to touch any nice Point, without that Fineness and Delicacy of Spirit, which can proceed only from the most exquisite Parts: Not to overcharge a Discourse with too much Matter, which would oppress its Vigour and Force, and would leave no room for the Author's Reflexions, or the Readers; to find the true Knot of each Affair, so as to unravel it clearly and easily; never to build very great Events upon very frivolous Motives: Not to conceal a false Thought under the Veil of a glittering Expression: To avoid every Thing that might seem forc'd, or elaborate: And still to follow that Ray of Light and Understanding, which inclines Men to acquiesce in the Sense of an Historian, by giving them a good Opinion of his Abilities? So that in the Constitution of History, Judgment seems the most necessary and essential Part. An Orator may be indulg'd in his bright and lively Sal-lies of Eloquence; and may venture upon those bold Strokes, so agreeable to Men of lofty Spirits, who are affected with nothing more, than with that which has an Air of Hardiness and Confidence. A Poet may wander from his Subject; and seems not oblig'd by the strict Rules of Wisdom. But an Historian, who is suppos'd always to speak in cold Blood, and upon mature Deliberation, must be so entirely Master of himself, as to let fall nothing but what's judicious. For no Kind of Undertaking requires so much Reason, so much Prudence, so much Wit,

so

so much of every good Quality, as History manag'd with Success: And after all, a Genius and Nature endow'd with so many Accomplishments, is still insufficient without a Knowledge of the World and of Mankind. That which made *Polybius* so excellent an Historian, was his Conversation with *Scipio* and *Laelius*. In *Thucydides* and *Livy*, we have the most perfect Models of History; there's nothing Antiquity can boast of, so finish'd in this Kind, nor does any Advantage seem wanting to either Author, except that *Livy* is the more natural, and *Thucydides* the more sincere. *Tacitus* is admirable in his Way: *Lipsius* gives him a general Preference, but all the World does not subscribe to that Opinion. He is certainly a Writer of a very singular Order and Character, who has great Beauties intermixt with great Defaults; but the latter are, in a good Measure, disguiz'd by the Brightness of his Genius, which shines in all that he says, and by I know not what Sublimity, which raises him above Authors that have more Exactness and Nature. However, he has his Party, and his Admirers. But those who are most smitten with his Charms, are rather the Men of Wit and Fancy, than those of the deepest Judgments; those who are more affected with Gaiety than with good Sense. Among the Moderns, I find *Mariana*, *Davila*, and Father *Paul*, to have had a true historical Genius. *Mariana* has the Gift of Thinking and Speaking nobly, and of Imprinting a Character of Greatness on all that passes through the Mind. *Davila* is happy, in cloathing Actions in their due Circumstances; he reasons very well upon Matters, and links his whole Discourse in so fine a Chain, as gives it a more engaging Air than all others. Father *Paul* in his History of the Council of Trent,
strikes

strikes what Colour he pleases into all that he says; no Man ever possess'd that Art in a more eminent Degree: He has likewise shewn a great Capacity in thoroughly examining all the Points of Doctrine, and making his Reader perfectly acquainted with them: No Man ever wrote with greater Artifice or Wit; and no Man ever with less Reason or Truth: He is always guided by Passion, and yet always wise enough to dissemble his Passion. He aims at a Pleasantry, that we may not think him to be out of Humour; and by this means he runs into the other Extreme: He rallies too much in so serious Things, and takes too great a Liberty of Wit in a Subject not only so grave, but so sacred, as that which is before him: His Resentment every where diffuses it self through his Style. Thus, this Historian, who had one of the greatest Genius's that ever was, is yet one of the most vicious in his Manner and Character of writing History, where nothing is so unpardonable as Party and Animosity: We yield very little Credit to an Author, if we see him prepossess'd with Interest. And this may lead us to consider, in the next Place, the Morals of an Historian.

XXVII.

As every Man frames his Morals according to his Temper and Disposition of Mind, so we may discover an Historian's Genius by his Principles. And here, first of all it must be confess'd, that we meet with very few Men who have Spirit enough to carry them above the Impressions of Hopes and Fears, and who are more heartily concern'd for Truth than for Interest. It is the latter that's the Cause of all the false Judgments which Men frame in their Reports of Things. A Man who professes to instruct the
Publick,

Publick ought first of all to arm himself with this Courage and Resolution; and upon no other Maxim an Historian ought to commence his Labour. When this is once firmly establish'd, his great Study and Endeavour must be, to win upon the Credit of Mankind, and to recommend all that he delivers with the Air and Complexion of Truth. His Morals are principally to be directed towards this Aim; which he can only compass by securing a good Reputation: 'tis not Promising and Protesting that will be allow'd as Proofs of his Sincerity: His whole Discourse must demonstrate the Honesty of his Principles, and the Uprightness of his Heart. He must have an Air of strict Probity, joyn'd with all the Candour of an unbiass'd Spirit; so as to deliver things without determining them before-hand, and to present them in such a free Manner, as that they shall be still referr'd to the Reader, as the supreme Judge. He must stand neuter in all the Disputes of contending Factions, and must not suffer the least Suspicion of Partiality. Nothing must fall from his Pen, but what bears the Image and Character of Reason and Justice. His unfeign'd Love of Truth must be the Rule of his Expressions, and of his Conceptions. He must always speak like an honest Man; and not drop a Word that shall be an Offence against Modesty or Integrity. He must be exact in the severest Sentiments of Honour; must leave no room for any Distrust of his Candour and Ingenuity; and must engage Men to a firm Dependence upon all he says, by persuading them that he is incapable of Fraud, and an utter Stranger to the Arts of Imposition. No Man can ever miscarry that proceeds upon so good Principles. 'Tis by this Purity of Morals that *Thucydides* has establish'd a Reputation

*Ne quæ
suspicio
gratiæ sit,
ne quæ si-
multatis.
Cic. de
Orat.*

Sincerity with all the World, and merited the Belief of all Ages. 'Tis by the Love of Religion, and the Veneration of Providence, which appears in all *Xenophon's* Writings, that we are inclin'd to rely upon his Testimony; as being assured, that a Man who has so deep a Sense of Piety engrav'd in his Heart, can never submit to Falshood. *Polybius* has more of the Sceptick and the Libertine; he censures the vulgar Opinions of the Gods, and of infernal Punishments, as so many Fables, and hopes to banish them out of the World. Nor is *Livy* more persuasive by his great Capacity and Genius, than by the Strictness of his moral Honesty: Among all the clashing Interests, Intrigues, Affections, and other Disorders of Men, that compose his Story, he discovers a clear Bottom of Truth and Probity, and shews the honest Man, as well as the excellent Writer. In laying open the secret Folds of other Mens Hearts, he gives us the Picture of his own; and while he discovers the false Lights of their Conduct, he is not himself betray'd into false Views: He passes a sound Judgment on all Things; because his Soul as upright as his Sense, is exquisite. *Paterculus* talks too much of his own Person and Family; a great Author should forget what he is himself, the better to describe what other Men are. Besides, those high Compliments which he bestows on *Tiberius*, towards the Conclusion of his Work, look too much like Flattery and Design. An Historian must be rais'd above such Considerations, 'ere he can fill the Measures of his Character. On the other Hand, *Tacitus* speaks well of no Man; he condemns all that other Men think or act. He is a Master of Shifts and Dissimulation, concealing a very villainous Heart under a very fine Wit. He is always mistaken

in the Point of Merit, because his Notion refers it wholly to Craft and Management; and it's from the Stock of Policy rather than of Truth that he furnishes out his Discourse. As he is commonly suspicious and ill-natur'd towards Men, so he speaks of the Gods without shewing the least Mark of Piety and Religion: As may be observ'd in his Defence of Destiny against Providence, in the sixth Book of his Annals, upon Occasion of *Trafullus* the Astrologer's being admitted as the Confident of *Tiberius*. So difficult it is, for an ill Man to be a good Historian; the Principles of honest Acting and true Writing, being in a Manner the same. When an Author takes Pen in Hand, he commences a Person of a publick Character; but he degrades himself, and renounces this Honour, if he descend to his own private *Capacity* and *Thoughts*; either by wrecking his Resentment, as *Procopius*, who upon a Pique against the Emperor *Iustinian* and the Empress *Theodora*, corrupts the Truth with a Mixture of Passion; or by following his Prejudices, as *Eusebius* and *Theodoret*, who make use of their History to establish their Errors; or by flattering those whom 'tis his Interest to please; as *Buchanan* has stain'd the Honour of *Mary*, Queen of *Scots*, to make his Court to Queen *Elizabeth* of *England*; or as Father *Paul* has made his History of the Council of *Trent* a Satyr upon the Religion and Church of *Rome*, which he represents throughout as a Series of Cheat and Collusion, to be reveng'd on the *Pope*, who had given him Hopes of a *Cardinal's Cap*, and afterwards disappointed him. *Paulus Jovius* is plainly a Man of Interest, a Pensionary of *Charles V*; unjust and malicious upon some Occasions, and basely servile and dawbing upon others. His Elogies of famous Men are so many distinct Pieces, which

he compos'd for the Sake of getting Money, and they were written according as he was paid. *Guicciardin* is in a Passion against *France*. *Sandoval* would make *Charles V* pass for a most catholick Prince, while he supported the Protestants in *Germany*, upon a Quarrel with *Paul III*. *Cabrera* extols the Piety of *Philip II*, who espous'd the Cause of Queen *Elizabeth* against *Mary Stuart*, only because the latter was a Friend and Ally of *France*; and thus contributed to the Overthrow of his own Religion in *England*. *Herrera* is a mere Braggadocio; and represents every Thing in favour of his Country. In a Word, there are scarce any to be found in the Number of Historians, without their peculiar Inclinations and Aversions: they cannot divest themselves of personal Regards; and thus, according as they are dispos'd in their own Temper, or bespoken by others, they turn History into a Satyr or a Panegyrick. We seldom meet with any of so strict a Character as *Thucydides*; who by the Force of his disinterested Sincerity, commends *Pericles* throughout, from whom he had suffer'd so ill Treatment; and is always just to the *Athenians*, tho' by them sentenced to a Banishment, under which he died: He is a Man without Passion, that proposes the Judgment of Posterity as the only Aim of his Work; and has no Tie, no Engagement but to the Truth: And here he has shewn himself an honest Man beyond all of his Profession; because he is always an honest Man. *Livy* seems more favourable to *Pompey* than to *Cesar*; *Dion Cassius* to *Cesar* than to *Pompey*. *Germanicus* is the darling Hero with *Tacitus*: Whom yet *Paterculus*, so full of Candour to others, seems to have lessen'd; probably, that he might do the more Honour to *Tiberius*. *Ammianus Marcellinus*

*Pleraque
ignave
Germani-
cus. L.II.*

nus is a constant Adorer of *Julian* the Apostate, and as constant a Declaimer against *Valentinian*, his Successor, because a *Christian*. *Eusebius* shews us only the bright side of *Constantine*; *Zozimus* only the Dark. *Procopius* makes an Idol of *Belisarius*; *Eginart* of *Charlemagne*; *Sandoval* of *Charles V*; *Strada* of *Alexander Farnese*. In short every Historian has his Hero, whom he looks upon as a Creature of his own making, and dresses him as fine as he can, that he may be the more gaz'd upon and admir'd. This is what brings a Suspicion upon most Histories, because their Authors are commonly interested in the Subject, and so not at Liberty to be sincere. Those who are above the Corruptions of Interest, are carried blindly away with the Love of Praise, and the nice Care of their Reputation betrays them into the other Extreme. *Josephus*, *Josephus* in his History of the *Jews*, sometimes suppresses true Miracles, in which he thought the *Heathens* might be difficult of Belief; and introduces Fictions which he conceiv'd to be more agreeable to their Taste and Capacity; that by this means he might gain upon their Credit; this was the way rather to destroy, than to establish his Religion. Things must be told as they are, in spite of the Incredulous; for there can be no greater Dishonesty in a Man that pretends to instruct the Publick in the Truth, than to profane it by such sordid Mixture. Nothing Base or Servile, nothing Loose or Immodest, should approach an Historian's Thought; one Slip in this Respect may ruin the Opinion of his Vertue. But tho' I am far from approving the Art of Flattering great Men, (as *Eusebius* has extol'd *Constantine* in all regards, who had certainly more than common Failings,) yet I think they ought to be favour'd on some Occasions. For as we are

non tam studebat vera scribere quam credibilia; hac causa fuit, cur praterierit miracula, quod apud infideles fidem non erant habitura, & narravit fabulas quas putavit iis magis probabiles futuraturas.
Leo. C.
ital.

Z 3

oblig'd

oblig'd to say nothing but the Truth, so we are not oblig'd to say all Truths. *Quintus Curtius* might have been excused from giving us the Recital of *Alexander's* Debauches. There are some privileg'd Heads, to which we are always to pay Deference; we are to use them tenderly and respectfully, and never to insult their Character; we may speak of their personal Vices, but we must not violate their high Dignity, nor break in upon the Veneration we owe to their Greatness. *Tacitus* has raked together so much Filth of *Tiberius*, that *Boccalin* might well complain of the Nuisance. *Lampridius's* Accounts of *Heliogabalus* and *Caracalla*, have rendered his History contemptible: nor has *Platina* shewn overmuch Judgment in treating the Popes with so little Ceremony. All Men will not be of my Opinion in this Matter; but perhaps wise Men will: And I am fully persuaded, that tho' there is a great and just Merit in being sincere, yet Sincerity it self may, by Misapplication, become ridiculous. On the other Hand, since 'tis next to impossible to praise well; because 'tis so difficult to perform this Office with true Delicacy, and to lay the Colours in the right Place, and because the World is commonly out of Humour with Panegyrick, and seldom vouchsafes it a kind Acceptance, it seems to be a Rule of good Sense, never to commend Persons otherwise than by a faithful Report of their good and commendable Actions. 'Tis a known Adventure, that of *Aristobulus*, one of *Alexander's* Captains, who as they were sailing upon the River *Hydaspes*, propos'd to entertain his Prince with reading to him his newly compos'd History of the Defeat of *Porus*. *Alexander*, impatient of so many gross Flatteries, snatch'd the Book out of his Hands, and threw it into the Water; withal giving the Author to understand, that he well deserv'd

serv'd to bear it Company, for having the Impudence to build his Master's Praise upon false Exploits, and so to argue a Deficiency of True.

These are the Morals that I should recommend to an Historian, for whom I should be concern'd as a Friend: At least, these should be my own Principles, if I took a Fancy to writing History, and had a Genius equal to such an Attempt. I would endeavour to preserve such a Modesty in my Sentiments, as never to seem overpleas'd with my self, or my performance: For who can bear the Extravagance of the Author mention'd by *Photius*, who addressing himself to write the History of *Alexander* the Great, promises that his Stile shall be as great and magnificent as the Name and Atchievements of his Heroe? After all, a sensible Man will, perhaps be discourag'd from engaging in this Field, if he does but read the Judgment of *Dionysius Halicarnassæus* upon *Thucydides*: There's no Author, of whatsoever Talents or Capacity, but would tremble under the Severity of such a Critick.

This is the Sum of those Reflections that have occur'd to me, in Reading the Historians. I am not so vain, as to impose them for Laws: they are the Thoughts of a private Man, which may happen to be good, if imploy'd to a good Use. I shall conclude with giving some few Strokes towards the Character of the most eminent Authors in History.

XXVIII.

Herodotus is the First that has digested History *Dulcis*, into a rational Form; and he has the Honour *eandis*, to have beaten the Way for all that came after *fusus*, *Herodotus*. *Quint.* him. His Stile is Purity and Elegance it self. *Athenæus* admires, with great Justice, the Charms of his Discourse. His Subject is great and vast, as comprehending whole Nations, Kingdoms,

Laudatur
ab omni-
bus ut re-
rum expli-
cator sin-
cerus &
gravis.
Hujus ne-
mo neque
verborum
neque sen-
tentiarum
gravita-
tem imi-
tatur.
Cic. de
opt. Or.

and Empires, the Affairs of *Europe* and of *Asia*. He is not very exact in what he relates; because indeed he has taken in too wide a Field of Matter; but he seems to me to be sincere beyond the ordinary Pitch, as treating the *Greeks*, and *Barbarians*, his Countrymen, and Strangers, without any Mark of Partiality. I think, *Plutarch* has us'd him very hardly, in suggesting, that most of his Conjectures proceeded from ill Designs. Indeed, the Prejudice and Animosity was of *Plutarch's* side; who resented the disparaging Character that this great Author had given of his Country *Bæotia*. *Thucydides* is accurate in his way of writing, faithful in his reports of things, sincere and disinterested. His Stile is Noble and Majestick: He is Severe, but with such a Severity as does not intrench upon his Grandour. His Subject is manifestly less considerable, and less extensive than that of *Herodotus*; yet when *Dionysius Halicarnassæus* prefers *Herodotus* to *Thucydides*, I take him to be partial to the former, for the sake of their common Birth-place; the latter being in my Judgment, the most accomplish'd Historian of *Greece*. But nothing can give us a more rais'd Idea of *Thucydides's* Worth, than what we are inform'd of by *Lucian*; that *Demosthenes* attain'd his Art of Oratory by studying this History, which he had transcrib'd no less than Eight times with his own Hand. *Xenophon* has a Purity of Language, a natural and agreeable Composition, a rich and easie Vein, full of admirable Sense, a clean Imagination, and a curious turn of Wit: But not much Greatness, or Elevation. Nor does he always observe the Decorum of Manners, but makes ignorant Men and *Barbarians* talk like Philosophers. *Cicero* acquaints us, that the great *Scipio* would never let this Author go out of his Hands. *Longinus* says, the true Cha-

Character of his Wit consisted in his fine and happy way of thinking. He is, no doubt, an excellent and very complete Historian: And 'twas by reading his Works, that *Scipio* and *Lucullus* became no less accomplish'd Generals. *Polybius* is a fine Speaker: He has a Stock of good Things, but does not manage his Stock so well as the Writers before mention'd: Yet his Work is to be valued, if 'twere only upon the Authority of *Brutus*, who in the very Crisis of his Misfortunes pass'd whole Nights in reading it. Indeed *Polybius's* Design was not so much to write an History, as to compose general Instructions for the Government of a State; as he himself declares at the Entrance of his first Book; and by this means he seems to desert the Character of an Historian: Which oblig'd him to interpose, at the beginning of his ninth Book, a kind of Apology for his manner of Writing. His Stile is frequently loose and Incorrect. *Dionysius Halicarnassæus*, in his Work of the *Roman* Antiquities, has shewn a great and uncommon depth of Sense, and Knowledge, and Reason. He is Diligent and Exact, Judicious and Weighty; and has the Advantage of *Livy*, as to the Truth of his Relations; but after all, he must be confess'd to be very tedious when he turns Haranguer. *Diodorus Siculus* has somewhat of Greatness in his Character; but then he is vastly too wide and diffusive, as a Collector from *Philistus*, *Timeus*, *Callisthenes*, *Theopompus*, and other Historians. *Philo*, and *Josephus*, give Proofs of a very extraordinary Eloquence; but both these Learned Jews seem too fond of gratifying their Heathen Readers, to whose Taste and Opinion they are servilely compliant. *Arrian* is an affected Imitator of *Xenophon*, to the very number of his Books.

Appian

Appian has copied from all the *Greeks*, and by this confused Medley has rendered his *Stile* very unlike any of those *Originals*. *Scaliger* accuses him as a Pillager of other *Mens* *Labours*: He is beholden to *Plutarch* for his finest *Strokes*: After all, he must be allow'd to have got together a good Fund of *Materials*. *Dion Cassius* has lost his *Credit* with the greatest Part of the *World* by his undistinguish'd Mixture of *Prodigies* and *Wonders* with his *Story*: He is so far from adhering to the *Truth*, as even to desert all *Probability*; as when in his sixty sixth Book he reports *Vespasian* to have given Sight to a *Blind Man* by Spitting on his *Eyes*. *Procopius* is exact in what he delivers, as having attended *Belisarius* in the *Wars*, and been an *Eye-witness* of his famous *Actions*; but he is too dry in his *Account* of the *Persian Affairs*, which seems design'd for a bare *Journal*. He gratified his *Passion* in writing his *secret History*, but shew'd his *Temper* in suppressing it during his *Life*. The *Generality* of the *Byzantine Historians*, as *Agathias*, *Cedrenus*, *John de Curopalato*, &c. transcrib'd from one another, and that but very negligently, as not to reach any *Shadow* of the *Dignity* and *Grandour*, the *Judgment* and *Fidelity* of the ancient *Grecians*.

Among the *Latins*, *Salust* is great in his *Air* and *Manner*, just in his *Wit*, and admirable in his *Sense*. No *Man* ever so happily imitated the profound *Intelligence* and exact *Severity* of *Thucydides's* *Stile*. He is sometimes hard in his *Expressions*, but never disgusting: His *Brevity* intrenches a little upon his *Perspicuity*; there's nothing false in his *Manner*, and nothing without *Weight* in his *Discourse*; though his *Practice* was far from being commendable, yet his *Principles*

Alienorum
Laborum
fucus. Jos.
Scalig.
Animad.
Euf.

Subtilissi-
mus brevi-
tatis arti-
fex Salu-
stius, pro-
prietatum
in verbis
retinentis-
simus. A.
Gell.
Salustius
homo ne-
quam, sed
gravissimus

alienæ luxuriæ objurgator. Lactant.

ciples

ciples are always just and excellent: He incessantly declares against Vice, and takes all Occasions of pleading the Cause of Virtue: I look upon him to have been somewhat disaffected towards his Country, and suspicious of his Neighbours: but in other Respects one of the greatest of Men. *Cæsar* has the best Talent at expressing himself that ever was. Learned Men have good Reason to admire the inimitable Purity of his Stile; but I am still more charm'd with the Justness of his Sense; for, perhaps no Man ever wrote with greater Wisdom: He is almost the only Author that is guilty of no Impertinences. He speaks of himself as of an indifferent Person, and takes care always to maintain the prudent Character that he first embraced. He is not, indeed, a consummate Historian; but had he taken a little more Compass, and given more Life and Spirit to his Discourse, he had been an Example of Perfection. 'Tis a Glory to this incomparable Author, that *Henry IV* and *Lewis XIV* Imploy'd themselves in translating his History of the *Gallick War*. *Livy* is the most finish'd Pattern, in whom all the great Qualities of an Historian meet and conspire; a fine Imagination, a noble Expression, an exact Sense, an admirable Eloquence. His Spirits seems to have been fram'd for none but great Ideas: He fills the Conception of his Readers, and thus makes his way to their Heart, and wins their Soul. He is the greatest Genius for History, and one of the greatest Masters of Eloquence that ever appear'd in the World. I could never apprehend any Meaning in that Censure of *Asinius Pollio*, who pretends that his Language favour'd more of *Padua* than of *Rome*. His great Talent is to make Men feel what he says, to inspire his Readers with his own Thoughts,

*In Tito Livio pu-
llo inesse
quandam
Patarini-
tatem.
Quint.*

Thoughts, his Hopes and Fears, and all his Passions, by moving every secret Spring of their Hearts. *Tacitus's* Manner is different from all others ; but he is so wholly taken up with representing great Events, as scarce ever to stoop to smaller Affairs, which yet ought not to have been neglected. He thinks finely, but seldom expresses himself clearly. He assumes too much of the Philosopher. He determines every Thing with as great Haughtiness and Assurance, as if he held the Destiny of all Mankind in his Hands. He spares no Man, speaks evil of Humane Nature in general, and is perpetually moralizing upon the Follies of others. How successful has he been in spoiling many good Wits, by seducing them to the vainest Study in the World, the Study of Politicks ? 'Tis with this Witchcraft that so many *Spaniards*, as well as *Antonio Perez* ; and so many *Italians*, as well as *Machiavel* and *Ammarato*, have been infatuated. 'Tis only by the Brillancy of his Discourse, that this Author is so excessively delightful to Men of strong Imaginations, while the too exquisite Subtlety of his Reasonings and Reflections are wont to disgust Persons of a more natural Wit. His way of Criticising is fine and nice in it self ; but he seems to blunt its Edge, by affecting to play the Critick upon all Occasions. As he always aims at the greatest Thoughts, so he sometimes reaches a true Sublimity ; and 'tis by the help of this that he imposes upon his Readers: It is not Pleasure, or Instruction, but Admiration, that seems to have been the great End of his Writing. He has somewhat so very rais'd and extraordinary, as may recompence and atone for most of his Failings. But there has been so much said in Praise and Dispraise of this Author, that 'tis hard to come to any End in speaking

*Evenit
nonnun-
quam, ut
aliquid
grande in-
veniat qui
semper
quaerit
quod ni-
mum est.
Quint.*

speaking of his Character. He is certainly a Wit above the ordinary Standard, made rather for Ostentation than for the Business of the World, and Commerce with Mankind. *Quintus Curtius* is to be commended for his Impartiality: He tells us the Good and the Bad of *Alexander*; and does not suffer the shining Merit of his Heroe to blind his Eyes. If there's any Fault in his History, 'tis that of too much Politeness; but then he has excell'd in the sweet and natural way of Painting the Manners. This finish'd Character which we have hitherto admir'd in so many great Men, is no longer to be met with in the following Ages. *Justin*, rather an Epitomizer than an Historian, does but flou- rish upon Matters. He has a large Compass of Knowledge, says a great many good Things, and preserves a number of Facts, the Memory of which had otherwise been Extinct. Most of the Authors of the *Augustan* History confin'd themselves to writing Lives; (as *Plutarch* and *Herodian* had done among the *Greeks*, and *Sueton* and *Cornelius Nepos* among the *Latins*) and thus degenerated from the Character of Historians: They are but mere Registers, Copiers, and Compilers; have nothing delicate, and scarce any Thing rational: They were Born under an unlucky Planet for History; and are of no Eminence or Consideration, but for giving some rude Draught, some confus'd Idea of their own Times; such are *Spartian*, *Ammianus Marcellinus*, and those who succeeded them. We find little Sincerity among the modern *Greeks*; their Genius seems much delighted with Visions; and they are always hot upon the Scent of some extraordinary Adventure. The Love of Learning, which began to revive with these last Ages, has produced a whole Flight of Histori-
ans,

ans, who by studying the Ancients, and forming themselves upon those Models, appear'd with more Honour than their nearer Predecessors. Among those who have distinguish'd themselves, *Commines* has writ with singular good Sense, and equal Sincerity: *Paulus Amylius* is pure, but Superficial: *Paulus Jovius* is entirely sway'd by Interest and Passion: *Machiavel* seems very exact in his History of *Florence*: In his other Reports, his Wit has the start of his Judgment: He is guilty of manifest Injustice to the famous *Castruccio Castrucci*, whom he treats as an Enemy to his Country. *George Merula*, so much admir'd and fear'd for his Criticism, by the Order of his Prince, *Ludovico Sforce*, undertook the History of *Milan*, which prov'd so wretchedly dry, as to do him very little Honour. *Mariana's* History of *Spain*, is what has not been excell'd by any of the Moderns, either in Greatness of Design, or Majesty of Stile: This Author is accurate beyond the common Standard, and a complete Judge of every Thing he delivers. *Buchanan's* fine Things are all borrow'd from the Ancients; and, in particular, he is too servile an Imitator of *Livy*. He writes with great Sense and Capacity, but does not raise the Character of his Persons to any noble Pitch: His long Citations in his third Book are no more agreeable to some Judges, than the Pedigree of the *Scotch* Nation in his Second. The *Germans* have form'd vast Projects upon their own History, but have brought nothing into the natural Order of a regular Design. Most of the *Spaniards* discover a Spirit of Partiality for their Kingdom and Nation, which renders them suspected. The *Italians* abound in particular Memoirs of their different States and Governments, but have no complete Body of History.

History. I forbear to speak of the History of the *Goths*, by *Jornandes*; that of *Flanders*, by *Meierus*; of *Burgundy*, by *Heuterus*; of *Hungary*, by *Bonfinus*; of *Poland*, by *Cromerus*; of *Bavaria*, by *Aventinus*; with many others of the like Character, because I haste to shut up these Reflections, with observing that we begin, among Us, to conceive some brighter Hopes of a perfect Historian, from the Approbation given to those who, at present, oblige the Publick.

THE

THE
Author's PREFACE
TO THE
Reflexions upon Philosophy.

THE *Reflexions upon Philosophy*, which here follow, are not propos'd as these which I pretend to maintain, but only as Remarks that I have occasionally made upon Authors, and their Opinions; which I now offer in the Way of Conjecture, for the Examination of the Publick, and for my own Satisfaction. The chief Design of this Essay is to give the true Notion of a Science which is the Rule of all other Sciences; to shew the Use and Practice of it in former and latter Ages, by an historical Account of its Progress, and Decline, with all the Adventures it has gone through, during the course of more than two thousand Years; so as, in this one View, in which I have endeavour'd to Unite so many Things, to discover what is Solid, or Vain, what is Strong, or Feeble, what is True, or False, in the whole Body of Philosophy.

An Attempt, so disproportion'd to the Abilities of a private Person, would have argued great Rashness and Presumption, had I not in some Measure prepar'd myself for the Enterprize by consulting the Learn'd of all Times. And this obliges me to declare, in the first Place, that I scarce offer any thing barely upon my own Authority; and that when I speak either of the Antients, or the Moderns, I speak the Thoughts of those who have been best able to judge of their Character and Worth.

Worth. The intelligent Reader will be convinc'd of this Truth without any particular Confession; and will save me the Trouble of Crouding a Book with Citations, which seems already to be overcharg'd. If on some Occasions I speak with more Assurance than Ordinary, 'tis not because I would affect to dictate, or would usurp the Chair: 'Tis only that I may present the Learned with a clearer View of what they already understand, may refresh their Memory, and revive their Ideas.

But though I would gladly alledge the most able Judges amongst the Antients and Moderns for my Vouchers in the following Discourse, yet I cannot presume to make them responsible for all that I say; because 'tis very possible I may misquote, or misapply them: And therefore I am contented the World should know, that what is good is owing to their Assistance, and what is ill to my own Mistake. For as 'tis ridiculous to pretend Infallibility in any Thing, so I am sensible how difficult it is, in so extended a Subject, to be exact. If Strabo and Diogenes Laertius have sometimes err'd in their Accounts of the Old Philosophers, I can plead no Exemption from Error in the History of the New. And therefore I shall say nothing to justify my self upon this Article, but what any One, upon the slightest Reflection, may urge in my Excuse.

The hardest Task, in this whole Enterprize, was to throw so vast a Matter into some Kind of Form; the bare Distinction of the several Sects hath never yet been compleatly settled, after so many Authors have labour'd in this Field. Plutarch does not adjust their Difference, and Diogenes Laertius blends and confounds them with one another. Varro reckons up two hundred eighty eight, and Themistius makes the Number full three Hundred. But because it would be endless to follow so wide a Scheme, I have reduc'd all these straggling Sects under seven principal Orders. The first is that of Pythagoras; in a Manner, the

same with that of the Egyptians: For, as to the Philosophy of the Phœnicians and Ethiopians, we have scarce any certain Information. The second Order, is that of Socrates, and Plato, of the Old and New Academy, of the Pyrrhonians, and Scepticks, which is originally the same. The third is that of Aristotle, and the Peripateticks. The fourth is that of Zeno and the Stoicks, Descended in a direct Line from Antisthenes, Diogenes, Crates, and the Cynicks. The fifth, is the Tribe of Epicurus, deriv'd from Leucippus, Democritus, and Aristippus. The sixth, is that of the Eclecticks, or Seekers, founded by Potamon of Alexandria. The seventh is that of the Arabians, the Averröists, and the Schoolmen; the same, in a good Measure, with that which now obtains in our Universities. These are the Limits within which I have confin'd my self: And this Division of the Sects, or Tribes, is the Ground of all my Reflections, among which I have scatter'd some touches of Morality and History, to relieve the driness of the Subject, and to make Philosophy appear less disagreeable.

As to the Style of these Papers, it has been my only Concern to express my self plainly and clearly upon a Subject which seems to refuse all studied Ornaments. I have not enter'd into the Discussion of the Common Precepts and Forms of the Schools, to avoid Prolixity, and that the Matter might not grow cold upon my Hands. I have been contented to rest in general Maxims, without canvassing things by a thorough Examination. In which I have endeavour'd to imitate Cicero, who in his Philosophical Writings, scarce ever engages in the scrutiny of particular Opinions, but so far as is consistent with his ordinary Politeness. For what he objects to Varro is really applicable to himself: "He has perform'd enough in Philosophy to inflame Mens Minds, but too little to instruct them." He only explains the leading Rules, and Principles, of each Tribe,

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Tribe, and then subjoyns his own Remarks upon them. I have here attempted the same Method, the better to conform my self to the Genius of an Age, which seems more affected with good Sense, than profound Learning. And, as these Reflections contain in them a Censure of false Philosophy, and a just Encomium of the True; I am secure, by this means, of pleasing the most considerable Class of Philosophers, which is that of honest Men. It was indeed, with regard to them, that I entertain'd the first Thoughts of this Design, to rectifie their Notions of a Subject which is so very liable to Misapprehension. I have concluded this Piece with the Use of Philosophy in Religion; those who make the highest Pretensions to the Former, being commonly less solicitous about the latter. The great Benefit that Christians ought to derive from Philosophical Enquiries, is to support and confirm their Faith: But there's always a Decay of the true Christian, where there's an Over-balance of the vain Philosopher.

REFLECTIONS

UPON

PHILOSOPHY

in General.

Vid.

Diog.

Laert.

I. VIII.

Cic. de

Off. 2.

Quintil. l.

XII. c. 1.

Plutarch

in Symp.

Jamblich.

in vit.

Pythag.

Plato Dio-

nem Syra-

cusium e-

rudivit.

Cic. Off. 1.

Diog.

Laert. in

Pyth in

Emped.

THE Name of a Philosopher, in it self compos'd of Modesty and Simplicity, appear'd so fine, and so glorious to the Learned in antient Times, that they prefer'd it to the proudest Titles, and the most illustrious Characters of Honour. That Love of Wisdom, and that Study of Nature which they profess'd, gave them such an Authority over the Spirits of Men, that their Example serv'd for a publick Instruction, and their Maxims were receiv'd as Oracles in the World. Great Men and Governours, applied to them for Advice, in Affairs of the last Importance: Cities and Provinces submitted to their Conduct; and Princes themselves esteem'd it a Glory, to have been there Disciples. It was Philosophy which taught *Pythagoras* that Integrity of Morals, and that severe Course of Life, which drew after him so numerous a Train of Followers. It was this that gave *Empedocles* the Honour of refusing a Crown, and of preferring a private and peaceable Life to all the Pomp of Greatness. By this,

Democritus

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Democritus rais'd himself to the Contemplation of natural Things, and renounced the Pleasures of the Body, to enjoy those of the Mind with greater Freedom and Tranquillity. It was this that enabled *Socrates* to die without Arrogance on the one Hand, or Weakness on the other. If there appear less Temper and less Modesty in the Death of *Cato*, who seems to have over-acted the Philosopher, yet we may observe, in that, some Strokes of gallantry and greatness of Soul, which could inspire him with such an utter Contempt of Life. And since there is scarce one Action of Bravery and Resolution recorded in *Pagan* Story, but what was owing to the Spirit of Philosophy, we may affirm this to have been, in some sort, the Motive and Principle of the brightest Virtue that ever shone among the Corruptions of *Heathens*.

Democritus dicitur oculis se privasse, ut quam minime animus à Cogitationibus abduceretur.
Cic. de fin. A Gell. 1. 10. c. 17. Diog. Laert. in Socrat. *Socrates, impius sententiis damnatus, dixit exquisitissimo animo se*

mori. Cic. de fin. Plut. in Cat.

Cato Socraticæ vanitatis imitator, videtur causam quasiisse moriendi, ut stoicorum decretis obtemperaret, & nomen suum grandi aliquo facinore clarificaret. Laët. l. 3.

II.

The *Egyptians*, who were the first Philosophers of the World, gave their Doctrine an Air of so mysterious Obscurity, as to make it pass with the People for a considerable Part of their Religion. By this means, it seem'd to be invested with publick Authority, and obtained Honour and Credit among the Learned. It was the Design of their Priests, in veiling their Observations under Figures and Hieroglyphicks, to surpass the vulgar Capacity, and distinguish themselves from the Multitude. Having no other Method of Teaching but by Tradition, and being very uncommunicative to Strangers, as *Strabo* assures us, they will afford us but slen-

δυσμετάδοτος.

der Remains of their avow'd Tenets. Indeed, whatever is said of Philosophy, before it's Reception in Greece, is built upon so little Foundation; and all the Discourses that we meet with upon the Subject, in the Fragments of Sotion, Hermippus and Hermodorus, mentioned by Diogenes Laertius, as well as in Lucian's Dialogue of the Fugitives, are so very fabulous, that, in relation to its first Originals, I chose to confine my self to plain Fact and History, as the only certain Informations. Besides, this mysterious Philosophy of the Egyptians is so nearly Allied to that of Pythagoras, that the Method and Principles of the one and the other are in a good Measure the same: As is observ'd by Plutarch in several Places of his Works, by Jamblichus in his Life of Pythagoras, by Selden de Diis Syris, and other Authors.

III.

Incredibile est quanto studio inquirenda veritatis Græcia omnis excuserit. Lactant. The Greeks, who shew'd the greatest Passion for the Search of Truth, applied themselves with so much Zeal to the Contemplation of Nature, that there were more real Discoveries made in Physicks, from the Time of Thales, to that of Plato, than in many Ages that follow'd. And it must be confess'd, that Philosophy in its infant State, produced so many extraordinary Genius's, and display'd so much Reason in its very Lispings of Speech, that its first Beginnings afforded a happy Ground-Work and Model to After-times. It was by the Force of long and severe Study, that Men attain'd to apprehend in some Degree the most considerable Motions of the Heavenly Bodies, to distinguish their Periods and Revolutions, and to form the first Draught of an universal System; to discern the Obliquity of the Zodiack, to lay open the

Anaximander traditur primus figuriferi obliquitatem intellexisse, hoc est rerum fores aperuisse. Plin. N. H.

Secrets

Secrets of natural Things, and to take a way that Veil which was drawn over most of the Works of Providence, so as to render them the Subject of human Meditation and Enquiry. Among those who engaged in this Attempt, *Thales, Anaximander, Anaxagoras, Heraclitus, Hippocrates, Democritus, Empedocles, Archelaus*, especially signaliz'd themselves. *Plutarch*, who has given the History of their Opinions, has indeed, testify'd the Contradictions and Absurdities, into which the greatest Part of them were betray'd. Yet it is their just Commendation, to have made the first Steps in so difficult a Path, and to have clear'd and trac'd out, the unknown Ways for those that come after them; and by thus giving Birth to *Arts and Sciences*, they have made themselves venerable to all Posterity. *Justin* the Historian observes, that while Learning and Application made Philosophers in *Greece*, bare unassisted Nature made others in *Scythia*, among the *Barbarians*; as appears from the Example of *Abaris* and *Anacharsis*, mentioned by *Apuleius*, who, without the Help of Rules or Discipline, obtain'd the Character of Wisdom.

Mundum
tradidit
disputati-
oni eorum.
Eccl. III.
Prorsus ut
admirabile
videatur,
hoc illis
dare na-
turam,
quod Gra-
eci longâ
sapientiâ
praeceptis-

que Philosophorum consequi nequibant. Just. l. 2.

IV.

Thales and *Pythagoras* were, properly speaking, the two great Founders of Philosophy among the Ancients; the one in *Greece*, the other in *Italy*. In the School of *Pythagoras*, we find somewhat more regular and solid, than in that of *Thales*, and his Successors. *Pythagoras's* whole Doctrine being conceiv'd as a Mystery, the chief Character of his Scholars was Submission; and that religious Silence, to which he

Quando
philosophi
esse cepe-
runt?
Thales, o-
pinor, pri-
mus. Cic.
ex Hor-
tens. apud
Laëtant.

*Ingenti vir
ingenio
Pythago-
ras, supra
capitulum
hominis
animi au-
gustioris.
Apul.
Cic. Acad.
Quest.
Diog. La-
ert.
A. Gelli-
us.
Jambli-
chus.
Porphyr.
&c.*

so strictly obliged them, was but an Artifice to make himself heard with more entire Respect. This Philosopher's Life, is at present a Subject of Controversy, as well as his Opinion. He must no doubt, have been a Man of profound Capacity, of a most penetrating Judgment, and most indefatigable Industry. His common Method of Teaching, was by Geometry and Numbers; by the former he explain'd material and sensible Things, as he did intellectual Things by the latter, and by Musick. He had too solid a Genius to fancy any Thing real in Numbers, which are purely intentional, or notional, as *Aristotle* proves in his *Metaphysics*. But he found such a Facility in displaying the Perfections of Things by Harmony and Proportions, as scarce ever to express himself in other Language; and his Numbers were so many instructive Characters and Symbols.

This whole Science of Numbers, so familiar to *Pythagoras*, has been a Secret ever since, and we are yet at a Loss about it. *Jamblichus*, in his Life of this Philosopher tells us, that he invented a Musick proper for the Cure of the Passions. His Morality is loose and disorder'd, consisting of fine Sayings without Foundation. His Physicks are almost the same with those of the *Platonists*. His Doctrine of two Principles, the one good, the other evil, upon which the *Manichees* grounded their Heresy, is utterly False; in as much as there can be but one First Cause of all real and substantial Effects. *Pythagoras* boasts in *Plutarch*, that the chief Benefit he deriv'd from Philosophy, was to be incapable of Wonder or Surprise, as being instructed in the Cause and Reason of every Appearance; and *Horace* observes

*Nil admiri
vari propè res est una, Numici, &c.*

the

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the same in his Epistle to *Numicius*. After all, *Pythagoras* had so extraordinary a Genius for *Pythago-* Philosophy, that the succeeding Masters esteem-*reorum* ed it an Honour to tread in his Steps. *Socrates* *nomen* and *Plato* are beholden to him for most of their *multa sæ-* fine Notions. And upon a closer View of the *cula sic* other Sects, we shall still find somewhat of *Py-* *viguit,* *ut nulli* *alii docti* *viderentur* *Cic. Tusc.* *thagoras's* Spirit diffus'd through, and reigning in them all.

V.

Socrates was the first that ever began to reduce the confused Ideas of his Predecessors into some *Socrates* Method and Order, by ranging their natural *primus* Observations under proper Heads, so as to ren- *Philoso-* der them useful in the forming of Arts and *phiam de-* Sciences. Besides all that Agreeableness of Wit *vocavit e-* *celo. Cic.* which arises from a facility of Genius and Fe- *Tusc.* *Socrates* *qui philo-* licity of Parts, he had all the Depth, and all *sophie* the Solidity imaginable; and yet this Height of *parens ju-* Understanding and this Abundance of Light, *re dici po-* was attended with true Simplicity, and in- *test.* *Idem de* *Fin.* *Plutarch.* *de Gen.* *Socrat.* *Dulcem,* *facetum* *festivique* *sermonis* *Socratem* *accepimus.* *Cic. Off. 2.* *Socrates* *in ironia* *longe om-* *nibus le-* *pore præ-* *stitis.* *Idem de* *Orat.* *tant Meekness.* While really engaged in eve- ry Thing, he seem'd wholly unemploy'd; he preserv'd an Air of Pleasantry in treating of the gravest Subjects; and his most serious Meditations never rob'd him of his good Humour. As 'twas his constant Intention not to speak like a Wit, but like an honest Man, so there was always somewhat just and noble in his very Trifling, and his Raillery. He pretended to no Accomplishment, and was capable of All. Those Notices which serv'd him for the Instruction of others, and which advanced his Scholars to such a Degree of Improvement, seem'd only to embarrass him with Uncertainty; and as rational as he was, he too much distrusted his Reason. The Quickness of his Discernment was so oppress'd

*Socrates
disputandi
quâdam
subtilitate
sophista-
rum insti-
tuta refel-
lebat.*

*idem de
clar. Orat.*

*Ita dispu-
tat Socra-
tes, ut ni-
hil affir-
met, refel-
lat alios.*

*idem Qu.
Acad.*

*Socrates
ipse sibi
detrabens
in dispu-
tatione,
plus tri-
buebat iis
quos vole-
bat refel-
lere, idem
ibid.*

*Aristot.
Elench.*

l. 2.

press'd by the Fertility of his Invention, that his different Views of Things, had no other Effect, but to cast him into Irresolution and Suspense. By his ingenuous Confession, upon all Occasions, that he knew nothing, he expos'd the Vanity and Presumption of the other Philosophers his Contemporaries, who boasted that they knew every Thing; and his avow'd Ignorance procur'd him more Reputation than all his Knowledge. He was wont to give those that oppos'd him in Discourse as much Advantage as they desired, that he might refute with the more Authority, the less he assum'd in Debating: And thus he gain'd an absolute Power over their Sentiments by his Deference and Compliance. It was chiefly by concealing his Advice, that he engaged others to follow it; and the Empire he acquir'd over Men's Minds was owing to the Art he had of declining it, by always shewing an Indifference for his own Opinion. But as he was the Leader of all the Sects; so he was, in some sort, the Author of all their Heats and Divisions. For his Reasonings were commonly level'd against Reason; and while he establish'd the Sciences, he left the Means of destroying them, the common Result of his Instructions being rather Doubt than Assurance, in his Hearers. But he must still be allow'd to have contributed much to that Form and Character which Philosophy took soon after. For 'twas he that first traced out the Plan of Logick and Morality, and supplied Principles to Physicks. Yet the peculiar Bent of his Genius, which carried him to seek for too much Nicety, and to refine upon every thing, was the reason that he handled these Matters with less Solidity than his Successors. Not but that his Authority is of very great Weight, when he advances any Point; but his Conceptions are, for

for the most Part, rather Principles than Decisions; and, upon the whole, his Philosophy seems much more proper to pull down than to build. He is famous for shewing a Greatness of Spirit, under the Simplicity of his Life and Conduct: For, when *Lyfias*, having compos'd an Oration in his Defence, read it to him in the Prison, he chose rather to die, than to make use of an Advocate, who he thought did not plead with a Dignity suitable to his Cause: And he at length underwent the fatal Sentence with such a Presence of Mind, as astonish'd and sham'd his Judges.

Orationem Lyfiae disertam sibi videri, fortem & virilem non videri. Cic. de Orat.

VI.

Plato is the finest Speaker of all Antiquity, and therefore he is more desirous to be heard, than solicitous to be believ'd; he is always florid, but not always sound. The false Taste that reign'd in his Time, through the Example and Credit of the *Sophists*, led him into this Gaiety of Style. His Genius seems compos'd of all the Judgment, Invention, and Elegance in the World, but has very little Method; and yet he recompences this Defect by some secret Oeconomy and Artifice of Discourse, that still carries him to his Aim. He chose the Way of Teaching by Dialogue, as the more free and disengaged Manner, and coming nearest to the Air of Conversation. He is rich in his Prefaces, and magnificent in his Entrance; but, like *Socrates* before him, he determines little, and scarce settles any Thing. But then there's so natural a Grace in all he says, that we can conceive nothing more charming. Those petty Incidents which he so artificially mingles with the greatest Affairs, those Trifles and Nothings with which he so finely circumstantiates what is most essential or important in a Subject,

Trapezunt. in Bessarion; Plato quidam quasi Deus Philosophorum. Cic. de N. Deor. In Platonis libris nihil affirmatur, in utramque partem multa disseruntur. Idem Qu. Acad.

ject, renders his Stile peculiarly attractive; and 'tis chiefly by this Advantage that he pleases and engages. Yet his too great Fondness of Appearing thus agreeable, carries him too far into the *marvellous* Strain. His Discourses are too often made up of Fable, and Metaphor, and perpetual Allegory. He has recourse to Mystery, the better to secure his Character; and 'tis by the Stratagem of some Falsity that he attempts for the most part to convince Men of the Truth. *Celcius Rhodiginus* affirms, That we ought to regard his Sense rather than his Expressions, which are so often wrapt up in Figures. He was too much a Politician for a Philosopher; frankly acknowledging in an Epistle to *Dionysius* of *Syracuse*, that the only Reason why he advanc'd all his Doctrines under the Name of *Socrates*, was that he might not be responsible for his own Opinion at so critical a Time, when scarce any Thing would go down with the *Palate* of the *Athenians*. The Condemnation of *Socrates* made him so very cautious and circumspect, that to recommend himself to the Publick, and to take off the Jealousy of his being in the Sentiments of his Master, he contrived to pass for a *Pythagorean*. Though he was a Person of a vast Capacity, (*For what is there, says Quintilian, that Plato did not know?*) and though he had an admirable Genius for the Sciences, of which he always speaks better than other Men, yet it must be confess'd, That he rais'd the Credit of his Philosophy more by the Vertues of his Life and Conduct, than by his Speculations of Doctrine. For it was he who first taught that true Philosophy consisted more in Fidelity and Constancy, in Justice and Sincerity, and the Love of our Duty, than in large

Attain-

L. 17. c. 5.

Qua ars
digna lite-
ris Platonis
desuit?

Quint.

Philoso-
phorum

quis dubi-
tat Platonem
fuisse

praeipu-
um, five

acumine
dicendi, si-

ve elo-
quentia

facultate

Divina?

Idem.

Plato non
linguae so-

lum, sed

animi &
virtutis

magister.

Cic. de
Orat.

Plus ex
moribus

quam ex
Doctrina

Socratis
traxit.

Senec
Plato Ep.

10.

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Attainments, or uncommon Parts. His Disci-
ples made such an entire Change in his Hypo-
thesis, and fill'd his School with so many rigid
Maxims, as scarce to leave any Footsteps of
the true Doctrin of *Plato*, which gave Birth to
so many different Sects in the Ages follow-
ing.

VII.

Aristotle is a Genius so much above the Stan-
dard, as not easily to be comprehended. By a
prodigious and unexpected Reach of Know-
ledge, he Advances beyond all Bounds, and
conquers all Opposition. He is an Eagle
mounted out of Sight; there's so much Force in
his Conceptions, so much Elevation in his
Ideas, that none can trace or follow him. He
was the first that gather'd the various Parts of
Philosophy, in order to the reuniting them in
one Body, and casting them into a regular Sy-
stem. No Man ever had so clear, and so pier-
cing a Discernment of True and False: For, as
he perfectly understood Reason, and was able
to discover it in its darkest Shades, or its strang-
est Dress; so he had the Art of making others
fully sensible of its Power, and of shewing it in
all its Compass and Proportions: A penetrating
Sagacity being the peculiar and happy Chara-
cter of his Wit. 'Twas by this Advantage he be-
came so exact an Observer of natural Things,
that his Master *Plato* call'd him *The Genius of Na-*
ture, as if Nature had chosen to make use of
his excellent Understanding for her Instrument,
or her Interpreter. There are so many noble
Marks of Wisdom and Judgment in all his
Thoughts, every Thing is so solid, and so re-
gular, that he never fails to satisfy the Mind of
his Readers: And indeed, there's scarce any
Thing just and rational that has been advanc'd

in

*De Schola
Platonis
tanquam
rivuli di-
versas in
partes pro-
fluxerunt
Stoici, Pe-
ripatetici,
&c. Laet.*

*Aristoteles
iphs Philo-
sophis ig-
notus, Cic.
Top.
Primus di-
spersa Phi-
losophiae
membra in
unum cor-
pus colle-
git.*

*Ex Laert.
l. 5.
Aristotelis
disciplina
est summa
veritas,
quoniam
ejus inel-
lectus fuit
finis huma-
ni intelle-
ctus, datus
nobis divi-
na provi-
dentia ut
sciremus
quid quid
sciri po-
rest. Aver-
de Anim.*

*Summus in
omni do-
ctrine vir,
& immen-
sa subtili-
tatis Ari-
stoteles.
Plin.*

in Philosophy, but what shews some Trace, and bears some Impression of *Aristotle's* Spirit; so that the various Judgments which have been passed upon his Doctrine in all following Ages, were owing to the different Measures of Wit and Knowledge prevailing in the World. For *Aristotle*, is certainly the Man that has given the greatest Weight to human Reason, and carried it to its farthest Length. And then, his Method is more Solid than that of all others, because his Principles are establish'd upon better Reason, and his Reason founded upon better Experience. Yet he chose to deliver himself with Obscurity; whether to conceal his Doubts, or to increase his Authority, is not certain. He seems to have written that he might not be understood; and his Works look as if design'd not so much for the Instruction of his own Age, as for the Exercise of all Ages to come: For which reason *Diogenes Laertius* compares him to the Fish that troubles the Water, when in Danger of being taken. But some Justice there is, that ought to be done him in Respect of these Imputations. His Obscurity does not proceed so much from his Choice, as from his Matter, and from his Way of diving into the Bottom of Things. 'Tis difficult, beyond Conception, to pierce through the thick Clouds of Nature; to unveil her most retir'd Secrets; to labour only in a vast Abyss; to walk only upon Precipices; to pursue the chace of Truth through Ways hitherto unknown, and yet to be obvious and intelligible to all the World. By this means, *Aristotle's* Discourse is commonly rather Strong and Nervous, than Polite and Clear: For he confines himself to a Succinctness of Stile, which cannot but put him under some Difficulties, and render him somewhat perplex'd; upon which

Account

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Account his manner of Writing seems fitter to astonish than to conceive. "A Man should In lib. 1. Phys. have heard him speak, (says *Pfellus*) to be able "to comprehend his Doctrine." He is wont, on some Occasions, to disguise under an affected Obscurity, what *Pythagoras* conceal'd under his Symbols, and *Plato* under his Allegories. But, upon the whole, we find such a Depth of true Sense, whenever we are able to fathom him, that we ought not overmuch to complain, if sometimes he exceeds our Line. It is in vain, therefore, that a whole Volly of little Wits have let fly against the Reputation of this great Man, under the Command of *Tilesius*, *Patricius*, *Bacon*, *Campanella*, *Jordan Brun*, and others, who by Censuring *Aristotle*, would seem to be more knowing than so many Ages and People that have had him in Veneration. *Casaubon*, upon *Laertius*, affirms, That none but Sophists and Pedants, that is, none but superficial Pretenders have spoken Ill of *Aristotle*: He cites an ancient Philosopher for this Remark; and if we consider who those Criticks are, from whom *Aristotle* has suffer'd most, in the present Age, we shall find their Character coming much within the same Description.

VIII.

Soon after this Period, Philosophy degenerated from its noble Birth, not meeting in the succeeding Ages with Men of equal Abilities to support it, as others had been to found and establish it; and that Purity which is maintain'd in its first Originals, was soon corrupted by the Multitude of Sects that sprung up under its Protection. It was then that it began to wear all Shapes, and to take all Colours, that the Passions of Mankind could put upon it, according to the different Courses of Interest, and the several

veral Veins of Inclination. For, besides that the School of *Zeno* was fill'd with false Virtues, and that of *Epicurus* with real Vices; Philosophy becomes impious under *Diagoras*, impudent under *Diogenes*, selfish under *Demochares*, railing under *Lycon*, voluptuous under *Metrodorus*, fantastical under *Grates*, drolling under *Mempus*, libertine under *Pyrrho*, litigious under *Cleanthes*, turbulent under *Arcefilaus*, and inconsistent under *Lachydes*. In fine, it was abandon'd to all the Extravagances that can enter into the Mind of Man. The Professors themselves became Examples of Envy, Suspicion, Lasciviousness, Injustice, Rage, and Indiscretion; all the Weaknesses, and all the Vices of the Vulgar. It was then that they began to reason, not upon Principle, but upon Humour, upon Interest, and upon Intrigues: So that, as

*Nilhil tam
absurde di-
ci potest
quod non
dicitur ab
aliquo Phi-
losopho-
rum. Cic.
de Div.
Unaqua-
que secta
alias ever-
rit, ut se
suaque
confirmet.
Laetant.*

Tully observes, in a little time, there was no Absurdity so gross, but had some Philosopher to espouse and patronize it. It was not Reason, but Passion that they made the great Judge of Controversy; and they were much less concern'd to maintain the Cause of Truth, than to be able, with Heat and Vehemence, to defend their own Opinions. The different Interests of the many Sects which endeavour'd to destroy each other, as engaged in the Oppositions and Quarrels of their Leaders, contributed largely to this Misfortune. The Old *Platonic* School was, by the Sentiments of the New, debased into the Tribe of *Scepticks* and *Pyrrhonians*, that profess'd to doubt of every Thing; and after *Theophrastus's* Death, the Order of *Peripateticks* cool'd very much in their Application to natural Things, as preferring the Pursuits of Eloquence. This was the Revolution in Philosophy, which follow'd that in *Greece*: For when

Greece

Greece had lost its Liberty under the Successors of *Alexander*, there arose few Genius's capable of the Study of Nature in the Reigns of the *Ptolomies*, who invited all the *Grecian* Masters to leave their Country, and settle at *Alexandria*. There was scarce any Philosopher of Figure and Eminence, in the rest of the World, except some little Remains of the Schools of *Plato*, *Aristotle*, *Zeno*, and *Epicurus* which still kept themselves alive at *Athens*. The chief of those who signaliz'd themselves elsewhere, were *Athenodorus*, Librarian to the Kings of *Pergamus*, who revis'd the Books of *Zeno*; *Straton*, Preceptor to *Ptolomy Philadelphus*; *Aristeas*, sent by *Ptolomy* the Son of *Lagus*, on the famous Embassy to *Eleazar* the High-Priest at *Jerusalem*; *Zoilus*, who made himself remarkable for his Critick upon *Homer*; *Nicander*, Physician to the younger *Attalus*, admir'd and prais'd by *Quintilian*; *Eratosthenes*, whose scatter'd Fragments we meet with in *Plutarch*, *Diogenes Laertius*, and *Clemens Alexandrinus*; *Apollonius* of *Rhodes*, Librarian to *Ptolomy Euergetes*, together with *Zenodotus*, and others. Besides, the Rivalship that happened between the Kings of *Alexandria* and *Pergamus*, upon their Humour of erecting Libraries, proved much to the Discredit of *Aristotle's* Philosophy: For the vain Emulation of these Princes to increase their Stores, and to collect an immense Number of Volumes, put them upon offering vast Rewards to any that should bring them a Book of *Aristotle's*, without Care or Distinction; as we learn from *Galen*: And thus, by the hasty Forwardness of the Librarians, above 40 Volumes of *Analyticks* were procured, that bore all of them, the Name of that Philosopher; whereas he compos'd but four Books with this Title; which Confusion gave his In-

terpreters afterwards so much Trouble in settling and dividing his Works.

I X.

Odi bomi-
nes ignavâ
operâ phi-
losophiâ
sententiâ.
Ex Pac.

Denique
naturâ hæc
rerum ra-
tioque re-
perta nu-
per, &
hanc pri-
mus, &c.
Lucret.

Philosophy was a Stranger to *Rome*, till the Improvements of polite Learning open'd a Way for its Reception. The three first Ages of that rising State were taken up in the Conquest of *Italy*: And we learn from a known Sentence of *Pacuvius*, that Philosophical Speculations were then consider'd as such a Piece of Idleness, as was even hated in a Government where every Member was profitably employ'd. The Love of Learning was first kindled among the *Romans* by their Commerce with *Greece*. It was then, they willingly entred themselves as Disciples to those, of whom, by Conquest, they had been the Masters. The Study of Philosophy had a lucid Interval in *Greece*, upon a Persecution of one of the *Ptolemies*, who banish'd from *Alexandria* the Professors that his Ancestors had invited thither; of whom the greater Part returned to *Athens*, where the general Concourse of learned Men soon after reviv'd the Spirit of the Sciences, and produced a Flight of Noble Wits, eminent in this respect: The principal were, *Panætius*, the Instructor of *Lælius* and *Scipio*; *Polybius*, *Carneades*, *Clitomachus*, *Apollonius Molo*, Master to *Cæsar* and *Tully*. The Reputation of these great Men drew to *Athens* all the flourishing Youth of *Rome*, to make their Studies under such Masters; and rais'd such an Emulation in the *Romans*, as put them upon a warm and vigorous Pursuit of the like Attainments. *Lucretius* was the first of this Nation, that explain'd Philosophy in Writing, as he himself has taken care to inform us. *Terentius Varro*, fil'd by *Salust*, the most learned of all the *Romans*, was a great Philosopher.

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Philosopher. *Quintilian* mentions another *Varro* *Varro & Atacinus*, who wrote upon the same Subjects. *Lucretius* And *Virgil* must be own'd to have been of the first that was affected with the Love of Nature, *Latinis præcepta sapientiæ iradidere.* and touch'd with the Sweetness of so charming Enquiries. But no Man, in this Period, discover'd so generous a Passion for Philosophy, as *Cicero*: He compos'd numerous Treatises in Prosecution of it; he explain'd the Doctrine of *Plato*, and his Successors, in his Books of *Academical Questions*; he represented the Morals of the *Stoicks* and *Epicureans* to *Brutus*; he address'd to *Hortensius* a Discourse in Praise of Philosophy, mentioned by *St. Austin*; he directed his Book of Topicks, a Part of Logick, to *Trebatius*. And, at length, upon the increasing Troubles of the Commonwealth, and the Establishment of the Tyranny, he withdrew to his Country-Retirement, and there adorn'd his philosophical Studies with such Application, that, in the Judgment of *Plutarch*, he valued himself more upon the Glory of being a Philosopher, than upon that of being an Orator. *Brutus*, likewise, in Imitation of *Cicero*, compos'd some philosophical Pieces, which are now lost. And this was the State of Philosophy at *Rome*.

Brutus noster sic Philosophiam latinis literis persequitur, nihil ut iisdem rebus Græciâ desideret. Quint. Acad. i.

X.

After all, the *Romans*, as they shewed a great Strength and Solidity of Judgment in all that they undertook, so they acquiesced in the Philosophy of *Greece*, without inventing a System of their own; possibly too, their Genius carried them with more Force towards the Study of Eloquence. However this be, 'tis certain they were never so far prejudic'd in behalf of

any Sect, as to quarrel and divide, upon the Difference in Opinion. The Character of Gravity essential to this People, was not susceptible of those Weaknesses which arise from Passion, and the Heats of Disputes. The Elder *Cato*, who had a natural Contempt for every Thing that was not of *Roman* Growth, declared, in general, against all *Grecian* Instruction. And it was in Virtue of this Maxim, that he moved for the speedy Dismission of those three Philosophers, *Carnéades*, *Diogenes*, and *Critolaus*, the Deputies of *Greece* to the Senate; for fear their Conversation should infect the Spirit of the *Roman* Youth. Upon the same Principle is founded that Speech in the Sixth Book of *Virgil's Aeneis*, which declares, with the Solemnity of an Oracle, that as well in Philosophy as Eloquence, *Greece* should have the Advantage of *Rome*; as if those unactive Arts were inferior to the Majesty of the Empire. *Horace* insinuates as much, after his Manner, by the severe Raillery which he has bestow'd on all the Sects, in his Satyrs; and by that Character of *Ofellus*, design'd for the Picture of a true *Roman* Philosopher, and for a Commendation of that grave, sincere, and solid Wisdom, which was attain'd and perfected without any Assistance from those Rules which serv'd to feed the *Grecian* Vanity. For the *Greeks* had certainly more Politeness, and were more exact in all Forms; but inferior in the Strictness and Purity of their Manners. This was *Quintilian's* Judgment upon the Comparison. *Cicero*, who understood the Opinions of all the Philosophers, yet did not embrace any with an absolute Preference to the rest. The younger *Cato*, was a *Stoick* by Constitution and natural Temper. *Cato* *sed rerum experimentis atque operibus verè civilem virum* Quint. l. 12.

Orabunt
causas me-
lius, cali-
que mea-
tus Descri-
bent radio,
Et sur-
gentia fi-
dera di-
cent. Vir.
Æn. 6.
—Ofellus
Rusticus,
abnormis,
sapiens,
crassâque
Minervâ.

Ego illum
quem insti-
tuo Roma-
num quen-
dam velim
esse sapien-
tem, qui
non dispu-
tationibus
exhibeat.

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far had a good Talent at *Logick*, and was very warm in the Study of Nature, as *Lucan* represents him; but he, as well as *Pomponius Atticus*, was a mere *Epicurean* in Morals. *Horace* appears to have been a Seeker, or a Philosopher at large; one that could comply with every Sect, but would profess none. That was commonly his favourite Opinion, which suited best with the State of his Affairs: And he himself pleasantly tells us, That he chang'd his Hypothesis as often as his Humour.

*Hæc durī
immota
Catonis
secta fuit,
servare
modum fi-
nemque
tueri, Na-
turamque
sequi. Lu-*

XI.

That Relish for Philosophy which had establish'd it self at *Rome*, in an Age of so much Wit and good Sense, still subsisted under *Augustus*, who himself had an excellent Capacity, and made use of the best Masters, as *Sueton* informs us: And, indeed, 'twas his Philosophy that chiefly ensur'd his long and peaceable Reign, after so violent a Revolution, as that from a Commonwealth to an absolute Monarchy. *Rome*, in his Time, gave Birth to a new Sect of Philosophers, founded by *Potamon* of *Alexandria*, who chusing out the more rational Parts of all the other Systems, reunited them in his own: Whence his Followers took the Name of *Eclecticks*; the Chief of whom were in the Number of the primitive Christians; as we learn from *Clemens Alexandrinus*. That Tyranny which began to be settled at *Rome*, in the Reign of *Tiberius* and his Successors, over the very Mind and Thoughts of Men, gave a new Turn to Philosophy, as well as to Policy, and Civil Affairs. The Men of Quality, for the most Part, profess'd Stoicism, to harden their Temper against the Extravagances of their Prince. Thus, Disgrace and Misfortune made more Philosophers than the Schools and the

*Diog.
Laert.
Suid.*

*Strom. i.
Philosophi
ex urbe
puls. A.
Gel. XV.
Cato jam
sectatores
habet, Sc.
Tac. Ann.
16.*

Closet: And Men grew wise, by the Discipline of being miserable. *Caligula, Nero* and *Domitian*, banish'd all the Professors from Rome. And *Nero*, in particular, by a fantastick Medley of Philosophy, sent for Magicians from *Arabia* to refine upon the Precepts of *Seneca*. Nay, *Seneca* himself was less a Philosopher, than a Courtier: *Quintilian* observes, that his Morals were severe, but his Principles not so exact. Indeed, Philosophy could expect to hold no considerable Figure, in Times that were wholly govern'd by Interest and Complaisance. The prevailing Study, was how to please and flatter the Emperor; while true Merit was shut up in Secrecy and Silence, and durst not expose it self abroad. It was not Virtue and Learning that now distinguish'd the Professors, but it was the Habit and the Grimace, which they assum'd, to put a Cheat upon the Publick, and to disguise the Liberty of their own Practice. In a Word, Philosophy began to be measur'd by the Beard, when it could no longer be rated by the Manners. In confirmation of This, we meet with a pleasant Adventure that happen'd to *Herodes Atticus*: Somewhat in the Shape of a Man presenting it self to him, wrapt up in a Cloak, and shewing a great Length of Beard, he put the Question to the Spectre, *who are you?* *I am* (say's the grave Thing, with a very arrogant Tone,) *a Philosopher: Why, yes,* (replied Herod,) *I perceive the Cloak and Beard of a Philosopher, but the Philosopher himself is not yet come into Sight.*

Quid stultius, quam ut Nero tantâ impensâ deducis ex Arabia magis, &c. Cardanderer. var. Seneca in Philosophiâ parum diligens, sed egregius morum instructor. Quint. Non virute & studiis ut haberentur philosophi laborabant; sed vultum & dissonantem ab aliis habitum prætendebant. idem. Sapientiam capillis & habitu jactant. Lactant. Barbam & pallium video, Philosophum nondum video. A. Gell.

XII.

The philosophical Spirit; which was grown out of Fashion, under some of the first Emperors, by reason of that Spirit of Intrigue produced by the Revolution in the State and the Weakness of the new unsettled Government, began to flourish again under *Adrian* and his Successors; insomuch that those Princes made it a Part of their Glory to be themselves Philosophers, and took a particular Delight, in being complemented upon this Accession in their Titles. With this Flattery were *Marcus Aurelius* and *Commodus* possess'd, at the same Time when *Athenagoras* and *S. Justin Martyr* were sent in Embassy to them from the *Greek Church*, to lay before them the Principles of *Christian Religion*. *Trajan*, whose Disposition of Mind rendred him a Patron of Learning; *Pliny*, by his Natural History, publish'd in the Reign of *Vespasian*, and *Dion Chrysostom*, by his moral and natural Treatises, contributed to the Revival of this Spirit, which *Plutarch*, (one of the wisest and most sensible Philosophers that ever wrote,) imparted to the Emperor *Adrian*, as he had done before to *Trajan*, having the Honour of being Preceptor to them both. At the same time the favourable Reception which his Works met with from the Publick, very much quicken'd, and heighten'd the Taste for Philosophy; in which Design he was very well seconded by *Phavorinus* the Emperor's Secretary, of whom *Diogenes Laertius* has made so frequent and so honourable Mention. The Vein of Study which *Adrian* re-establish'd at *Alexandria*, by inviting learned Men once more to settle in that Town, was continued in succeeding Reigns by the Care of *Epictetus*; who having left *Rome* under the Horrors of *Domitian's* Government, returned under *Antoninus*,

V. Athe-
næum I.
VI. c. 17.

who had been his Scholar: As also, by the Writings of *Arrian*, Scholar to *Epictetus*, and Instrueter to *Antoninus Pius*; by the Works of *Galen* Physician to so many Emperors, and the greatest Genius of his Time; by those of *Diogenes Laertius*, of *Herodes Atticus*, Scholar to *Phavorinus*; of *Pausanias*, *Aulus Gellius*, *Ptolomy* the famous Astronomer; *Maximus Tyrius* one of the Preceptors to *Marcus Aurelius*; with a Number of learned Men that came in their Place; as *Taurus* of *Berytus*, *Athenaus*, *Alexander*, *Aphrodisæus*, *Philostratus*, *Plotinus*, *Apuleius* and *Porphyry*; who being successively animated by the Example of their Prince, restored Philosophy in their own and the following Ages. In short Truth began to speak more freely, when the Oracles began to be silent. Philosophy was so much the Mode in the Time of *Lucian*, that he endeavours to expose its Professors in many Places of his Works; especially in his Dialogues of the *Lapithæ*, the *Scuffle*, the *Icaro-menippus*, the *Cynick*, and the *Fugitives*. Those pleasant Scoffs that he has pass'd upon them, whenever they came in his Way, (in Imitation of *Cratinus* and *Aristophanes*, who used the like Freedom with *Pythagoras* and *Socrates*,) shew thus much at least, that his Raillery was grounded on the Humour of the Times. Indeed many of the Philosophers had then so grossly abus'd their Profession, and prostituted their Names, that this Author, who took upon him to be a publick Censor of Manners, had Reason to give them so large a Place in his Invectives.

XIII.

But when once the only true and divine Philosophy, which came down from Heaven at the Birth of our Saviour, had spread it self in the World, by the admirable Doctrine, and exemplary

plary Lives of the first *Christians*; the Philosophy of the *Pagans* began to appear justly contemptible: Especially, when Men found that great, and supreme Good, which had been for so many Ages the Subject of unprofitable Dispute, to be now infallibly reveal'd; and when the *Christian* Morality, comprizing all the Treasures of heavenly Wisdom and Knowledge, was made publick to Mankind. And it was this wonderful Effect that first created a Jealousy in the *Heathen* Sages. For St. Paul discoursing in the *Arcopagus*, of the Immortality of the Soul, and Resurrection of the Body, as indubitable Truths, was treated with Scorn by the Philosophers then resident at *Athens*, who would have made him pass for a *Babler*. The Spirit of Pride and Vanity, that then reign'd in the *Pagan* Professors, obliged this great *Apostle* to discountenance it by that Admonition to the *Colossians*; Beware lest any Man spoil you through Philosophy and vain Deceit. The Emulation increas'd in succeeding Times. *Justin Martyr*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Tertullian*, and *Eusebius*, imploy'd all their Force of Eloquence, to expose the Foolishness of *Heathen* Wisdom; while on the other Side, the *Pagans* declaim'd against our Religion. *Lucian* had the Impudence to call the Author of it a *Sophist*, and his followers *Ideots*; and *Cacilius* in *Minutius Faelix*, reproaches them as absolute Strangers to good Letters or good Sense. S. *Austin* refuted these Calumnies in a particular Work, with all the Strength and Vehemence, which his great Genius could inspire. But in as much as the Miracles which the *Christians*

Quidam autem Epicurei & Stoici diserebant cum Paulo, & quidam dicebant quid vult seminiverbius hic dicere?
A&. XVII.

In Enchirid. ad Laur.

Quis risu non dignum putet, quod Apol-

lonium, Apuleium, ceterosque magicarum artium peritissimos conferre Christo conantur! Aug. Ep. 5.

wrought

wrought, were the highest and most irrefragable Testimony to the Truth of their Doctrine, their Adversaries had Recourse to Magick; and Enchantments, and endeavour'd to support themselves by evil Arts, when their Cause would not admit of good Reasons. This abominable Practice of Magick had been long before introduced under the Mask of Philosophy, by *Anaxilaus* and *Nigidius Figulus*, both of the *Pythagorean* Sect, and both deservedly banish'd, under *Augustus*; as well as by those *Arabian* Masters whom *Nero* invited to *Rome*. Under *Domitian*, it improv'd and redoubled its Strength, by the Impostures of *Apollonius Tyanæus*, which *Hierocles* in a set Discourse, oppos'd to the Miracles of our Lord; as *Philostratus* publish'd the Impostor's Life with the same wicked Design; and *Eunapius* writ the Lives of the Sophists, most of whom were Magicians, to vie with the Lives of the Primitive *Christians*, who gain'd every Day upon the Admirations of the World, by their supernatural Gifts, and their unblameable Behaviour. The detestable Studies of Magick were farther reinforced by the Doctrine of *Pythagoras*, which was then modish, and most of the Professors of which were no better than Necromancers, as *Lucian* upbraids them in one of his Dialogues. But nothing gave a greater Head to this devilish Folly, than the Extravagance of the Emperor *Julian*, who abandoning himself to all the frightful Superstitions of his wicked Curiosity, endeavour'd to make an execrable Medley of our holy Religion with the Impieties of Hea-

Icaro-
mentip.

Atque hoc ipso affines fuisse videmur maleficio, quod tuis imbuti disciplinis, Philosophia. Boeth. Consol.

most

most visibly in the Case of *Apuleius* the *Platonist*, who being arraign'd for this Crime, made no other Defence before the Judges, but that of a pretended Affinity between Philosophy and natural Magick. 'Twas out of this Abomination, (which continued till the Time of *Boethius*, and of which he formally clears himself,) that the cabalistical Doctrine took its Rise, as *Delrio* has inform'd us.

Disq.
Mag. l. 1.
c. 5.

XIV.

The more the Philosophy of the *Pagans* fell into Extravagance, and all Manner of Excess, the more the *Christian* Philosophy advanc'd towards Perfection, in its just Researches of Truth, by the Purity of its Doctrine and of its Morals. It is reported, that when *Solon* travell'd into *Egypt*, he happen'd to light upon a Philosopher, who accosted him in this arrogant Speech, *You Grecian Strangers are but Children*. But how fully was this Censure verified, by the Display of *christian* Wisdom, when the Light of human Reason appear'd so weak and glimmering before the Rays of divine Faith? Those who chiefly brought Philosophy into Credit among *Christians*, either by their Writings, or their publick Instructions, where *Aristides*, one of the most learned Professors at *Alexandria*, under the Emperor *Adrian*, *Iustin Martyr*, *Tatian*, *Athenagoras*, *Barde-sanes*, *Athenogenes*, *Apollinaris*, Bishop of *Hierapolis*; *Melito*, Bishop of *Sardis*; *St. Irenaus*, whom *Tertullian* styles a *Man vers'd in all Sciences*, *Tertullian* himself, who was oblig'd to study Philosophy in defending the Cause of Religion, which pass'd with the *Heathens* of those Times for a new philosophical Sect; *Pantenus* Master of the catechetick School at *Alexandria*; *Clemens* his Scholar, who after a vain Pursuit of secular Wisdom in *Greece* and *Egypt*, learnt the only true

Vid. Eu-
seb. Pa-
ræn. l. 10.
c. 2.

true and heavenly Wisdom, in the School of the holy *Pantanus*, and succeeded him in that famous Chair; *Origen*, successor to *Clemens*, who run through all the various Schemes and Hypotheses, the better to confute his Adversary *Celsus*; *Lactantius*, who had a Mastery of all the Antients Sects and Opinions; *Arnobius*, that wrote against the *Gentiles* with so much Learning and Capacity. *Gregory Thaumaturgus*, mention'd with so many just Praises by *Eusebius*; *Ammonius*, admired by the very *Pagan* Professors, and who was the first that taught the Philosophy of *Aristotle* in the *Christian* School. To these great Men we may add *St. Basil*, affirm'd by *St. Gregory* to have been the ablest Logician of his Time; *St. Chrysostom*, no less eminent for Philosophy than Eloquence; *St. Austin*, who besides his three Books against the *Platonists*, compos'd a System of Logick, extant in the first Tome of his Works. I might name many more, who adorn'd those Ages with the Lustre of their great Attainments, who authoriz'd and enforced their Religion by the Purity of their Lives, and brought Fruit from the dry Trunks of *Pagan* Learning, by letting in the Stream of *Christian* Doctrine, and Watering them from the Fountain of Truth.

XV.

This bright and flourishing State of Philosophy occasion'd by the Rivalship of the *Christian* and *Heathen* Professors, was soon overcast by the most deplorable Barbarism and Ignorance. It was in these miserable Times, that the *Huns*, the *Vandals*, the *Goths* and *Lombards*, pour'd themselves like a Deluge into *Italy*. This Confusion began with the Ruine of the imperial Library at *Constantinople*, under *Zenon*, where Philosophy and

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and all other good Arts suffer'd beyond Retrieve, by the Loss of an hundred and twenty thousand Volumes. The *Arabians*, in the succeeding Age having rendred themselves the Masters of the World, by their Conquest, made a Kind of a Revolution in Learning as well as in Empire. The Character of their Genius, which was subtil, deep, and musing, by fixing too close upon the Text and Letter of *Aristotle*, gave them an abstracted Way of reasoning somewhat different from the Solidity of the *Greeks* and *Romans*.

And tho' this new Manner had an Appearance of great Sagacity and Acuteness; yet it demonstrated it self to be false, by the Wild Conceits of *Avicenna*, *Alkindus*, *Algazel*, *Averroes*, *Alpharabius*, *Albohacen*, and others, whose Errors *Cossevinus* has collected to an enormous Number, in the thirteenth Book of his *Bibliotheca*. *Ludovicus Vives*, speaking of the Metaphysics of *Avicenna*, and the Philosophy of *Averroes*, censures both of them as the Dreams of a roving Imagination, and near of Kin to the Fables of the *Alcoran*. And *Thomas Aquinas* in one of his *Opuscula*, declares that *Averroes* who pretended to be a Follower of *Aristotle*, was indeed but a Corrupter of his Doctrine. But as Philosophy, under the Conduct of these new Masters, grew peevish and cavilling, by means of those Precisions and abstracted Ideas, which they brought into the Schools; so it grew at the same Time, Barbarous in its Expressions; and Reason seem'd to have forgotten to deliver it self in a reasonable Stile. It must be confess'd, that the *Arabians*, by the Fame of their Spirit and Genius, and by the Leisure they enjoy'd in Victory and Plenty, made so

Isti, profosculis philosophia, & arboribus placidissimis, cruceem ingeniiis fixerunt.

Vives de causis. Art.

Averrois doctrina, & Metaphysica Avicenna, omnia denique illa Arabica mihi videntur resipere deliramenta Alcorani: nihil fieri potest illis insultius frigidiusve. Ibid. Averroes non tam fuit Peripateticus quam Philosophia

Peripatetica depravator. Opusc. 14. contra Averroistas.

vigorous

vigorous an Effort on these Studies, together with the Mathematicks, as to be, in a Manner, the most distinguish'd Scholars of the World. *Averroes*, as he was naturally profound, and thoughtful, so by his constant Study of *Aristotle*, deserv'd a Name among his Commentators. He founded a Sect of Philosophers, under his own Name, who oppos'd themselves to *Aphrodiseus*, *Philoponus*, and the other *Grecians* of those Times. Yet, making use only of a most unfaithful Translation of *Aristotle's* Works, he has so grossly mistaken the Sense, that *Bagolinus* of *Verona*, *Zimara* and *Mantinus*, in vain en-

deavour'd to correct him. *Vives* observes, That as he had a very bad Version of *Aristotle* in *Latin*, so he made a worse Version of Him into *Arabick*. Indeed, besides the faulty Copies of *Aristotle's* Text, we are told by learned Men, that the Genius of the two Languages, the *Arabick* and the *Greek*, is so very different, that 'tis almost impossible to render the Sense of the one in the Expressions of the other. For what *Caelius Rhodiginus* says of *Avicenna*, we may say in Proportion of all his Country-Men. *Picus Minardus cum randula* informs us, That *Averroes* applied himself to *Aristotle*, and *Avicenna* to *Plato*, and that this was the Ground of the Contention between them. After all, they must both of them be allow'd to have been very great Persons, and to have held a considerable Figure in the State of Learning.

Avicenna
linguae
Græcæ ig-
narum cum
libros Ari-
stotelis
mutilos
perversos
que lege-
ret, auro-
rem emi-
nentissi-
mum minus

lium Rhodiginus says of *Avicenna*, we may say in Proportion of all his Country-Men. *Picus Minardus cum randula* informs us, That *Averroes* applied himself to *Aristotle*, and *Avicenna* to *Plato*, and that this was the Ground of the Contention between them. After all, they must both of them be allow'd to have been very great Persons, and to have held a considerable Figure in the State of Learning.

consequi potuit. Cæl. Rhod. Pic. in Apolog.

XVI.

The Schoolmen, who adher'd strictly to the Doctrine of *Aristotle*, and fram'd their Genius upon the *Arabian* Comments, whence it became so knotty and so subtle, were the last Sect of Philosophers

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Philosophers that appear'd with Reputation. *Thomas Aquinas* is look'd upon as the Founder of this Sect. For having read *Aristotle's* Philosophy, in a Translation of *Averroes* by a Spaniard, he then perfected that Method, of which *Lan-* Scholasti-
franc, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Gilbert Porretain*, ci quan-
 Bishop of Poitiers, *Abalarus* and *Peter Lombard*, tum inge-
 had fram'd the rude Draught upon the Scheme nio vale-
 of *S. John Damascen*, and the Elements of *Peter* ant sape
Cornestor; for all these great Men were very ostensum,
 eminent Logicians. *Daneus*, in his *Prolegomena* sed in in-
 to the First Book of the *Sentences*, has given the bonarum
 History of the Rise and Progress of the scholastick artium ig-
 Way; upon the Foot of which we may accom- nara sæcu-
 modate to it, that known Division of the *Platonick* la incide-
 Sect, into three different Periods, the Old, the runt. Grot
 Middle, and the New. The First, which began in Proleg.
 under the Archbishop of Canterbury, or rather de J. B.
 under *Peter Lombard*, and continued about two & P.
 hundred Years, and determin'd under *Albertus* Theologia
Magnus. *P. Lombard*, by introducing a Num- puritatem
 ber of useless Questions, much obscur'd the Pu- cæno qua-
 rity of theological Studies. *Alexander of Ales-* stionum,
 was the most considerable in this first Class of rivulisque
 Schoolmen. The second Period commenced opinio-
 with *Albertus Magnus*, Bishop of *Ratisbon*, whom num, com-
Trithemius affirms to have had the largest Capa- turbavit
 city of all in those Times; and continued to Lombar-
Durandus de S. Portian; in which Space, of about us. Aven-
 an hundred Years, the *Aristotelian* Doctrine was tin. Ann.
 carried to its Height of Glory, by the Labours
 of *Thomas Aquinas* and *Duns Scotus*. These
 seem to have been the two greatest Genius's
 for Philosophy in our latter Ages. No Man
 ever reason'd more justly, or with more Exact-
 ness than *Aquinas*: Solidity was his great Cha-
 racter, as Subtlety was that of *Scotus*; the one

Thomas
scriptor de
Scholâ om-
nium sanctissimus. Lud. Viv-
 and

and the other were so renowned for their Parts and Knowledge, as to become the Heads of the two most celebrated Tribes in the Schools; and, but for the Misfortune of barbarous Times, might have been equal to the greatest Philosophers of Antiquity. The third scholastick Age began with *Durandus*, and continued to *Gabriel Biel* the *German*, who pillaging his Predecessors, express'd ill what he conceiv'd well; his Harshness of Stile rendring him dry and unpleasant. At this time, the Emulation between the *Nominalists* and the *Realists*, serv'd farther to sharpen and subtilize the Spirit of the Schools. *Ocham* was the Chief of the *nominal* Way, who taught that *universal* Natures were but Names and Notions: And *Scotus* was the Leader of the *Realists*, who maintain'd that *universal* Natures were Things truly existent. As Learning was now tainted with the corrupt Air, and vicious Infection of the Age, so the Animosity between these Two Parties was carried to such an Extremity, as is not to be parallel'd by the Records of former Times. In *Germany* the Extravagance and Madness broke out into an actual War: The Contentions in the Universities were not Disputes but Battles; and Theses were proposed, and answer'd by main Force. It was then that Philosophy wholly amus'd it self about the Operations of the Intellect, the Method of Abstracting, and the Beating out of Ideas. Men contrived to whet away the Edge of their Wit, to wire-draw their Judgments with vain and frivolous Questions, and to put their Passions in a Flame about Forms and Trifles. Phantoms and Spectres were rais'd, and set in Combat against each other: Reason was oblig'd to cavil in its own Defence, and Truth was no longer the Prize of Mens Disputes. This Humour had

Aventin.
Ann. 6.

had the Vogue for Acuteness and Subtlety of Wit; with what Justice we may easily discern. Hence proceeded that dead Weight of Sums, and Courses, and Comments, which stifled all the Remains of good Letters in the World. Yet we must confess, That the scholastick Method, how barren soever, was strong and substantial, and very proper for the Detection of Falshood; Error and Sophistry not being able to stand before its Light. And, as for that Sharpness and Severity, those Animosities, and Heats, and Transports, that appear'd in the publick Contentions, they were not so much the Fault of the Schools, as of those who disturb'd the Schools, and perverted their genuine Use.

XVII.

The same Ages produced three other Philosophers, who by a Spirit of Innovation, deserted the scholastick Rules, and set up a quite opposite Method. These were *Remondus Lullius*, *Cardan* and *Paracelsus*, who seem'd to have follow'd almost the same Character under three very different Views. *Lully*, by the Commerce he held with the *Arabians*, attain'd an eminent Skill in natural Philosophy, Astronomy, and Medicine: Out of these three Sciences he compos'd a Fourth, that of Chymistry; of which he desired to pass for the great Restorer in *Italy* and *Spain*. He attempted utterly to displace the Order establish'd in the Schools, by a Method of his own Invention, which is so far from making Men learned, that it has scarce ever suffer'd them to continue rational. *Cardan's* Genius is irregular and vast, flying at all, and fixing upon nothing. What he tells us of his own Spirit, that it was form'd of a Mixture of *Salt* and *Mercury*, is ridiculously whimsical: And

In Dial.
Tethm.

Magnus
Chymista-
rum pater
Paracel-
sus, cujus
philoso-
phia pec-
cat magnâ
præcepto-
rum
âpre doctri-
na inso-
lentiâ ter-
minarum,
quæ omni-
bus bonis
artibus
bellum in-
dixit.
Sennert.

what he adds, that he held no Communication with it but in Dreams, has still more of the Enthusiast, or the Madman. It was he, that by bringing the dark and cabalistical Philosophy again upon the Stage, fill'd the World with airy Appearances; and pretended, by the Refinements of his Art, to turn Men into the Similitude of pure Spirit: But *Paracelsus*, who had more the Air of an Operator, than of a Philosopher, was the most extravagant of these Undertakers. He had entertain'd an unaccountable Design of framing a new Philosophy, new Physick, and new Religion; and by this Means had absurdly hoped to be the Mediator of a Peace between the *Pope* and *Luther*, and to bring them both to subscribe to his Notions. *Gohory* was the first that declar'd for him in *France*; a very superficial Naturalist, but a great Distiller. *Paracelsus* was profound in his Genius, dark and obscure in his Expressions; every Word he said was a Riddle, and he never deliver'd himself but in Mystery. *Rullandus*, a German Chymist, compos'd a Dictionary of his peculiar Terms, in spite of which, he is still unintelligible. *Paracelsus* was the Restorer of chymical Labours in *Germany*: The Emperor *Charles V.* gave him the Honour of a Conference; but despised him for a visionary Projector, upon his offering to fill the imperial Treasury by his Art. To these three Masters, we may add *Cornelius Agrippa*, *Arnauld de Villeneuve*, *Petrus de Apono*, *Roger Bacon*, and other Cabalists, mention'd by *Agrippa* in his Epistle before his *Occult Philosophy* to the Abbot *Trithemius*. This whole Way can end in nothing but Imposture and Delusion; as tending to disguise the Blackness of Magick, under the Veil of natural Science. About the same Time, *Reuchlin* endeavour'd to revive the Doctrine

Doctrines of *Pythagoras* in *Germany*, as *Marcilius Ficinus* had re-establish'd that of *Plato* in *Italy*. Such were the Distempers of those Ages, the Weakness of which sufficiently shews it self in these different Ragouts of Philosophy, this Contrariety in Opinions, and general Instability of Judgment.

XVIII.

To proceed ; as the Love of Learning, and especially of Philosophy, was now confin'd to *Europe*, so different Nations applied themselves to it, according to the Difference of their Genius. The *Spaniards* grew subtile in their Reasonings, great Formalists and Metaphysicians, as having an Head turn'd for severe Reflection, and grave Disputes. The *Italians* assum'd a more agreeable Character of Wit, and were choice and curious in fine Ideas. The Works of *Niphus* gave them a Value for *Aristotle's* Philosophy, as those of Cardinal *Bessarion*, and *Marcilius Ficinus*, inspired them with a Passion for the Doctrine of *Plato* ; to which they were more inclined than their Neighbours, by the Beauty of their Genius, which is publick and lively, and impatient of hard Labour. The *French*, as they found themselves capable of all Sciences, so they ventur'd upon all ; and by their ingenious and inquisitive Temper, successfully copied whatever was excellent in other Nations. The *English* by that Depth of Genius which is natural to them, undertook the more abstruse Researches into the Causes of Things, and by an invincible Application to Labour, excell'd the rest of *Europe* in their Improvements of natural Knowledge ; as appears from the Works they have publish'd on this Subject. The *Germans*, by the Necessity which their Climate lays upon them of keeping near the Fire, and by the

Convenience of their Stoves, apply'd themselves to Chymistry ; together with the other People of the North. Thus the southern Countries were employ'd, in rendring Philosophy profound and subtile ; the Northern in rendring it laborious and mechanical. Of modern Philosophers, those who have made the greatest Noise, are *Galilei*, an *Italian*, *Bacon*, *Hobbes* and *Boyle* Englishmen, *Gassendus* and *Descartes* Frenchmen, and *Vanhelmont* a *Fleming*. *Galilei* seems to have had the finest Genius, and ought, in my Opinion, to be look'd on as the Father of modern Philosophy. His Method holds a near Resemblance with that of the *Platonists* ; his Style is agreeable, and he disguises a great many Faults under his artful Manner of Writing. Whatever he has borrow'd from the Ancients he makes his own ; and in many Places where his Work is but a Copy, we take it for an Original. *Bacon's* Genius is extensive and vast ; the Largeness of his Capacity hinders him from being strictly accurate ; and he cannot stay to go to the Bottom of Things. The greatest Part of his Maxims, are rather Heads of Meditations, and Noble Strictures of Thought, than Rules of Practice ; his Opinions seem too fine and too glittering ; more like sudden Sparks of Fire, than like a continued and natural Light. *Hobbes* is obscure and unpleasant, singular in his Notions ; learned but not solid, inconstant in his Sect and Party ; sometimes an *Epicurean*, sometimes a *Peripatetick*. *Boyle* is exact in his Observations ; no Person in *Europe* has enrich'd Philosophy with so many Experiments ; and he reasons very justly from those Experiments ; which yet are not always infallible, because the Principles on which they proceed have no absolute Certainty. After all, he must be own'd to be a noble

noble Philosopher, and a great Master of Nature. *Gassendus*, who acts only as a Restorer of the Philosophy of *Democritus* and *Epicurus*, advances little himself, and has scarce any Thing of his own, but his Beauty of Stile, in which he is admirable. To refute his natural System, we need only make use of the Arguments urged by *Aristotle* against *Democritus* and his Followers. *Descartes* is one of the most extraordinary Wits that has appear'd in these latter Ages; of a fertile Invention, and a profound Meditation; the thread of his Doctrine is finely drawn out; the Method, according to his Principles, exactly contriv'd; and his System, tho' partly ancient and partly modern, very well put together. Indeed he inclines too much to Scepticism, and is a very ill Pattern for those who are naturally of an incredulous Temper; but still he is more of an Original in his Way. *Vanhelmont*, by the Skill in natural Causes which he had obtain'd after his peculiar Manner; perform'd so prodigious Cures, that he was put into the *Inquisition*, as suspected of doing Things beyond the Powers of Nature. In a Word, *Galilei* is the most agreeable of the Moderns; *Bacon* the most subtle; *Gassendus* the most learned and knowing; *Hobbes* the most roving and capricious; *Boyle* the most curious; *Descartes* the most ingenious; *Vanhelmont* the most of a Naturalist, but too much addicted to *Paracelsus*; the general Method of his Doctrine is founded upon the Sympathy and Antipathy of Minerals and Simples, of which he had a very great Comprehension.

XIX.

After a summary View of the different Opinions and Characters of ancient and modern Philosophy, this is what may be said upon the Comparison. The Ancient is grounded more

upon Authority; the Modern upon Experience: The Antient is simple and natural; the Modern artificial, and refin'd: The former has more Gravity and Modesty; the latter a more assuming and magisterial Air. The Antient is quiet and peaceable; so far from disputing, that it advises the forming and preparing younger Heads by the Help of the Mathematicks, to submit readily to Demonstration. The Modern has made it an Art to dispute of all Things, and to train up Youth in the Tumult and Contention of the Schools. The Antient searches after Truth, with a sincere Desire of finding it: The Modern takes a Delight in fencing and parrying with it, after it has found it. The one proceeds by a more regular Course, as taking the Metaphysicks for its Guide: the other, whenever it neglects this Assistance, is but uncertain in its Motions. Constancy, Fidelity, Resolution, and good Sense, was what they meant by Philosophy in *Plato's* Days. But Philosophy, in the Language of many in our Time, is a general Disgust to Business; a Chagrine and Melancholy; a renouncing of Pleasures when the Taste of them has been lost by the Mortifying of the Passions; together with I know not what Kind of Authority, resulting from an hoary Beard, a false Austerity, an unactive Phlegm and Moderation, and all the Wisdom that is usually owing to Weakness of Age and Constitution. The antient Philosophy is generally, the more knowing, as extending its Views on all Sides; whereas the Modern contains it self within the Bounds of natural Speculations. The Antient is more constant and severe in its Studies; more laborious and indefatigable in its Undertakings: For the first Professors carried on the Course of their Enquiries with that of their Lives. The Modern

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Modern is more unsettled in its Application, more superficial in its Labours, more precipitate in its Designs and Pursuits. And this Precipitation gradually accustoms it to rely too easily upon inaccurate Reasonings, groundless Reports unfaithful Witnesses, and ill concerted Experiments. It pronounces boldly upon Doubts and Uncertainties, to satisfy the Ambition it sometimes has of broaching its particular Opinions, and giving Vent to its novel Conceits. So that were the Prize in my Disposal, I should (with a great Judge,) be inclin'd to bestow it in favour of the *Mon-* Antients, whose good Sense alone seems prefer- *ragne Eff.* able to all the Art, and all the Refinement of the *l. 3. c. 5.* Moderns. But let us, without Prejudice, conclude, that as the Light is pleasant from whatsoever Quarter it breaks, so Truth ought to be valued, tho' coming from any Party. Don't let us fancy a Distinction between antient and modern Reason: For Reason, from what Side soever we look upon it, or whatsoever Colours we give it, will always be the same. Let us reflect, that if some Opinions have had the good Fortune to meet with a more kind Entertainment in the World than others, their Success was perhaps owing to more auspicious Planets, or more vigorous Societies and Cabals.

XX.

So that in managing our selves between the antient Philosophers and the modern, there are two Extremes to be avoided. The first, of those who by a strong Conceit of their own Ability, *O best ple-* think nothing comparable to the Age in which *rumque iis* they live. The Ambition they have to disen- *qui discere* thrall themselves from the Bondage and Usur- *volunt, au-* pation of antient Authority, is but a false Zeal; *toritas eo-* for, by this means, they would impose new *rum qui* Laws on Reason, under pretence of asserting its *docent.* *Cic. de*

Nos vino
scortisq;
demersi,
accusato-
res anti-
quitatis
vicia tan-
tūm dis-
cimus &
docemus.
Petron.

Freedom. And all those fine Admonitions which they give us, to divest our selves of the Prejudices of Education, Custom and Authority, and to cure our Minds of popular Errors and Prepossessions, are but so many Snares which they lay for our Easiness of Belief: They talk to us of Liberty, with no other Design but to bring us under a new Yoke. They would add to the Moderns whatever they detract from the Antients; and desire to ruin the Authority of *Aristotle*, only that they may build up that of *Descartes*. But can it be reasonable to despise those, whom all Antiquity has had in Veneration? Bare Tradition, and the universal Consent of Mankind should engage us to do Justice to those great and excellent Persons, who have been the Inventors of Arts and Sciences. The World is a wide and vast Assembly, in which every Age has its free Vote; and therefore, to know whom we ought to prefer in our Judgments and Characters of Men, we must consider who has deserved the most universal Approbation of the Publick. Superficial Spirits find the greatest Charms in new and upstart Opinions. But he that is happy in solid Wisdom, cannot suffer himself to be surpriz'd with the false Lustre of Novelty, but will be guided by the constant Suffrage of the Ancients; according to the Advice of the wise Man.

“Can it be believ'd, says *Tully*, that no-
“thing good, nothing even tolerable, should
“be produced by the united Labours of so
“many Ages, so many excellent Wits, such
“invincible Application and Study?” If there-
fore we are dispos'd to compare our selves, with

Sapientiam anti-
quorum
exquiret
sapiens.
Ecclus.
XXXIX.
In anti-
quis est
sapientia
& in mul-
to tempore
prudencia.

Job. XII.

Nihilne tot seculis, summis ingeniis, maximis studiis explicatum putamus? Qu. Acad. 4.

the

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the great Men of the first Ages, yet let us not pronounce rashly in our own Favour; we are interested and partial Judges, and Posterity alone ought to decide the Cause. To look backwards, and take a Survey of elder Times, is a powerful Lesson of Modesty and Sobriety. The renown'd Persons then upon the Stage, beside their extraordinary Genius for Knowledge, spent their whole Lives in unwearied Pains and Travels, with a Docility of Temper, not to be parallel'd in our Days. *Pythagoras*, till the fiftieth Year of his Age, was a Scholar under the greatest Masters in the World. *Eusebius* testifies that *Democritus* spent no less than fourscore Years in hard Study. *Parmenides* shut himself eighteen Years in a Cave, to finish his Logical Speculations. *Plato* gave forty Years Attendance to the Lectures of *Socrates*, *Archytas* and *Eurytas*. *Aristotle* labour'd more than twenty Years under *Plato*: And we after some two Years slight Practice under indifferent Masters, dare to enter the List against those Heroes.

XXI.

The other Extreme to be avoided, is the too servile Adherence of some Men to the Ancients, making an Idol of their Authority, and paying a blind Worship to their Merit. Such was the Extravagance of *George Trapezuntius*, who writ a Book to prove the Conformity of the *Aristotelian* Doctrine to the sacred Scriptures: And that of *Marcilius Ficinus*, who pretends that *Plato* acknowledged the Mystery of the Holy Trinity; in which respect he is justly condemn'd by *Molina* a Spanish Divine, for a Boldness highly injurious to the Purity of our Religion, and to the great Objects of Faith which are supernaturally reveal'd. The Passion of *Hermolaus Barbarus*, Patriarch of *Aquileia*, for the Philosophy of *Aristotle*,

Nisi ingratissimi sumus, illi clarissimi sacrarum opinionum conditores nobis nati sunt: ad res pulcherrimas alieno labore deducimur. Sen de Br. Vit

Veterum auctoritati tribui nimium volebat Plato, quod ipse in aegyptiis. Carp. in Alcibiade. 2. de Compar. Plut. & Aristot.

Bodinus. *Aristotle*, was much more scandalous. This learned Man, by a detestable Infatuation, is said to have consulted the Devil upon the true Meaning of the Word *Ἐντελέχεια*. But the wildest Enthusiast was the Emperor *Julian*, who by the Confession of his own Historian, sacrificed many Virtues and good Endowments to the affected Title of a Philosopher. He was chaste, and sober, and vigilant, and just, and brave. Yet by a ridiculous Bigotry to the ancient Masters, he prefer'd the Doctrine of *Plato* to that which *St. Paul* taught at *Athens*; and by so horrible an Estrangement of Mind, he became a Slave to all the evil Curiosity of an abused Superstition. The Pride and Folly of his Pagan Wisdom would not stoop to the wise Foolishness of the Cross, which he thought a Disparagement to his boasted Philosophy. And having chosen this Philosophy for his Religion, when once he became Master of the World and of his own Opinion, he renounc'd the Doctrine of *Jesus Christ*, to embrace that of *Socrates* and *Pythagoras*; by the Help of which he hop'd to raise to himself a Romantick Character, and to outshine the Philosophers his Contemporaries. So abominable was the Mixture of his Vanity and Impiety, that he would confess and own no Gods, but those whose Divinity depended upon his Suffrage. And his unreasonable Veneration for Antiquity, was the Thing that thus horribly corrupted and vitiated his Spirit. We ought, then, to observe a Temper between these contending Parties, and to shew such a Deference to the one, as shall not be conjoyn'd with a Contempt of the other. Let us advance in making larger Discoveries, without rejecting those that have been made to our Hands. Let us preserve the Freedom and Privilege of our Reason, and not

*Loquax
talpa, pur-
purata si-
mia, liserio
Græcus,
homo bre-
vis, Idolia-
nus. Amm
Marcel.*

not blindly adore either the antient or modern Guides: Let us do Justice to both, and pay Regard to Merit, in whatsoever Subject it shines, not examining whether it be new or old.

XXII.

But tho' we should happen to have so much Strength of Soul, as may resist our Prepossession in favour of the Antients, or our Inclinations to the Moderns, yet we are seldom resolute enough wholly to divest our selves of the natural Fondness we have for our own Conceptions. This is one of the greatest Weaknesses of human Understanding: Man, by the Force of Self-love, thinks nothing so properly his own as his Opinion: This he looks upon as his Creature, and therefore he renounces all other Interests, to maintain and support it. This Obstinacy of defending what Men have once embrac'd, has been sometimes carried to very strange and unnatural Extremities. *Pythagoras's* Scholars chose *Diog. La.* to be burnt, rather than to abjure the Doctrine *err. l. 8.* of their Master: And the Followers of *Hegesias* *Idem. l. 2.* by too strict an Adherence to the Rigour of his Precepts, starv'd themselves to Death. Nay, the Wise *Socrates* weakly paid his Life for his Philosophical Persuasion. Nor have there been wanting in these latter Ages, Men absurd enough to die Martyrs to their own extravagant Doctrines. For Error has its Votaries under a stricter Tie, and a more absolute Engagement than Truth. Nay, some there are, who take a secret Pride in authorizing that by their Suffrage, which does not approve it self to their Reason, and blindly follow Principles that they don't understand, only that they may enjoy the Vanity of Espousing what is abstruse and difficult.

Inter cætera mortalitatis incommoda, & hoc est, caligamentum, nec tantum necessitas errandi, sed errorum amor. Sen. Quasi quidquam N. H.

fit infelicius homine cui sua signenta dominantur! Plin. cult.

*Nihil volunt inter
homines
credi melius
quàm
quod ipsi
sentent.
Petron.*

*A Saturnis
capitum se
deceptum
tradidit
Hippocra-
tes; more
scilicet
magnorum
virorum*

*fiduciamque magnam habentium. Nam levia ingenia quæ nihil habent,
nihil sibi detrahunt. Magna viro convenit, etiam simplex veri erroris
confessio. Cels. l. 8.*

cult. These are the most universal Illusions of Self-love; which as 'tis ridiculous in all its Motions, is never more so, than in its Stiffness to justify its own fallacious Views: And as nothing is more irregular than what it wills and desires, so nothing is more indefensible than what it thinks and conceives. But those Men seem to run to the last Extravagance, who inveigh against all Opinions publicly receiv'd, can bear no Sentiments but their own upon any Subject of Discourse, and pity all that happen to be of a different Persuasion. They are so taken up with their private Notions, and so much abound in their own Sense, as to remain Strangers to the Sense of other Men. This is properly the Character of little and narrow Spirits. For, as much Merit as there is in vigorously maintaining true Reason, when we are once ascertain'd of its Truth, so much Virtue there is in abandoning false Reason, when we are once apprized of its Falsity. This is an Ingenuity of Temper truly magnanimous, in the Judgment of *Aristotle*. For there cannot be a nobler Mark of real Greatness of Soul, than thus to preserve our Liberty entire, between Truth and Falsehood, so as to be able to assert the one, and discard the other, according to our best Light, and our justest Apprehension of both. 'Twas thus *Hippocrates* confess'd himself to have been sometimes led into a Mistake by uncertain Principles. So great a Modesty could only proceed from as great a Capacity: For to distrust our own Sufficiency, is one of the surest Characters of Wisdom.

XXIII.

It requires a great Mastery of Knowledge, to be able to pronounce of Things, according to their different Degrees of Certitude ; to separate Truth from Appearance, to fix the Bounds of Probability, so as to pass a clear and distinct Judgment upon all Sorts of Questions. For the Disorders that arise in Mens Spirits, with regard to the great Variety of Opinions and Schemes, is owing to their Confusions and Indistinctness of Thought. For Example, *Copernicus* shut himself up in his Study, to erect a new System of the World. He reviv'd the Doctrine of *Nicetas the Syracusan*, That the Sun is the only Body in the Universe which preserves a constant Rest. He rack'd his Fancy to adorn and dress up his Hypothesis ; and we must own that nothing could be more finely conceiv'd, or more nicely wrought. Yet, would it be reasonable to admit the Conjectures of this great Man, as demonstrative Proofs ? Would it be just, to overlook the Authority of all former Ages, to set up a private Judgment as a Common Law to Mankind, and to oblige the whole World to believe that Nature is mov'd and govern'd in concert with the Imagination of *Copernicus* ? *Descartes* built a new System of Physick upon Principles not altogether new : He himself look'd upon this System as no better than a Fiction, or *Romance*, which was the Name that he gave his Philosophy among his intimate Friends. And shall that be sacred to me which was a Jest to the Author ? I confess my self his Admirer, but cannot submit to be in the Number of his Slaves : And I insist upon my first Principle, as the Measure of all philosophical Reasonings, that we ought to proportion our Assent to the different Degrees of Certitude in the Subject of Debate ;

*Maximé
sapiens
est, verita-
tem ab opi-
nionē se-
jungere.
Cic. de
fin.*

Debate ; so as never to entertain Truth as Probability, nor Probability as Truth. 'Tis in this *Epicurus*, as cited by *Tully*, has plac'd the Height and Excellence of Wisdom : And 'tis an Imputation of Folly to do otherwise : because Things are often very widely distant from the Representation which they bear in our Opinions and Ideas.

XXIV.

*'Non ab-
borreat à
publicis
moribus
philoso-
phia. Sen.*

*Ælian. v.
H. l. 4.*

*Ea philo-
sophia quæ
suscipit
patrocini-
um volup-
tatis, etsi
cui vera
videatur,
procul ta-
men abest
ab eo viro
volumus.*

It is from a wrong Genius, and a false Light, that Men forsake the ordinary Process of Philosophy, to pursue some extraordinary and unpractis'd Method ; and 'tis always a Sign of an evil Taste in Sciences, not to love what is commonly receiv'd : Men are very much in danger of losing themselves, when they are inclined to travel in By-paths. In the Conduct of Human Life, we cannot desert the publick Opinion, without exposing our selves to the greatest Absurdities. *Alexander*, though truly brave and valiant, for want of this Caution rendred himself little and contemptible. " He wept, says *Plutarch*, because, upon *Democritus's* Supposition of a Plurality of Worlds, he had scarce conquer'd the larger Part of One. " And *Ælian* well observes, that all the Greatness of Soul which appear'd in this noble Reflection, became ridiculous, as being built on a false Principle. In the same manner, according to *Cicero's* Judgment, a Magistrate, whose Life ought to be a publick Example, in a well-regulated State, would be absurd, if he should govern his Conduct by the Opinion of *Epicurus* ; and, instead of Gravity and Severity, declare for Liberty and Pleasure. A Person in Great Employment, unless he acts upon the strictest Principles, cannot

*quem autorem publici consilii, & regenda civitatis ducem esse
Cic. de Orat.*

retain

retain Men within the Bounds of Duty. With what Effect can he that is licentious in his Behaviour, persuade or command, others to be regular? "If, says *Tully*, in our Speeches at the Bar, we should follow the *Stoical* Notion of Good and Evil, of Honour and Disgrace, so contrary to the Belief of the rest of Mankind "we must never expect to carry a Cause." Nor is any Thing more extravagant than *Torquatus's* Way of arguing in the Senate, upon *Epicurus's* Principles, as represented by the same great Author. There are in that Discourse some Strokes of the finest and most delicate Railery; and thence we learn, that *Cicero* took a Delight in exposing the Maxims of all Philosophy, but such as was in common Vogue; and esteem'd nothing more repugnant to Eloquence, than Singularity of Opinion. It was the like Consideration, which engag'd *Demosthenes*, to keep clear of all the various Sects and Parties that so plentifully brought forth, in his Time; that he might not go out of the common Ways and Sentiments, which he judg'd the most proper for the Art of Persuasion. And *Julius Caesar*, though a great Philosopher in his Notions, yet was never so in his Ambition: He pursued no other Schemes, but those of Popularity and Address; because he knew, that these only could let him into the Hearts of his Countrymen. In a Word, 'tis very difficult to preserve the Character of a wise Man, and yet to recede from common Opinions; or the Character of a publick Person, and yet to entertain private and peculiar Conceits. And, to extend this to all Professions, how capricious would it seem in a Poet, to describe the Earth moving about the Sun, according to *Democritus's* System; or, according to that of *Descartes*, never to introduce the Stars, or

Con-

Alia bona

& mala

videntur

Stoicis &

ceteris

gentibus,

alia vis ho-

noris &

ignominia:

sed ea si se-

quatur

nullam

rem dicen-

do expedi-

re possi-

mus.

idem. ib.

Ea dicas

in Senatu

quæ non

sentias:

id non pu-

deat senti-

re quæ pu-

deat di-

cere.

Cic. de

fin.

Veteres

Stoici non

ad usum

popularem

& civilem

de rebus

disputant.

idem Off.

3.

Constellations, without talking of their *Vortices* and their subtle Matter? Upon such affected Principles, the finest Genius would but lay it self open to Ridicule.

XXV.

Ut in op-
timâ re-
publicâ
Tiberius
Gracchus,
qui otium
conturba-
ret, sic Ar-
cesilas qui
constitu-
tam philo-
sophiam
everteret.
Q Acad. 4

And y^t this is the Spirit which seems chiefly to reign among the Philosophers of our Days. Men attempt to signalize themselves by thinking out of the Way; and relinquish common Sense only because 'tis common. If they happen to imagine what was never before conceiv'd, they feel a Pleasure in advancing what was never before asserted. 'Tis on this Account, that *Arcefilas* who overturn'd the Old Academy to establish the New, is by *Tully* compar'd to *Gracchus*, and the other seditious Disturbers of civil Government. *Peter Ramus* in these latter Times, had almost ruin'd the University of *Paris*, by the like Methods: His Zeal against the pretended Followers of *Aristotle*, carried him to attack the true *Aristotelian* Doctrine; and under the Shew of restoring Peace to the Schools, he fill'd them with Tumult and Confusion. He was indeed a learned Man, bold and resolute in his Decisions, but naturally of a turbulent Spirit; who set himself to imitate *Laurentius Valla* and *Ludovicus Vives*, two eminent Criticks of the Age before him, only that he might have the Glory of raising a new Sect. In the same manner, how often do Men argue and dispute with no other Prospect, but to overthrow establish'd Things by an Affectation of Novelty? If unable to coin new Opinions, they find means to give a new Form and Stamp to the Old; and that they may erect themselves into Authors at whatsoever Expence, disguise and varnish over a new Doctrine with a Change of Language; imitating *Zeno* in dressing up ancient

ent Nations under modern Names: For what will not Men do to distinguish themselves from the Vulgar, and to lay the Basis of a great Reputation? But since 'tis really the Licentiousness of Manners that produces this in Opinions, there ought to be some Boundaries set to Thinking, and some Restraint laid upon Mens Theories, as well as their Practice. Religion, Law, Custom, Education, Rewards, and Punishments, are so many Considerations that ought to curb the Fancy in its unruly Flight; yet we often find it breaking out through all these Guards; and when it has once got loose, and pass'd the Limits of common Persuasion, there is no Absurdity but what 'tis capable of. And this shews how necessary it is, that the civil Laws should interpose their Authority in regulating Mens Sentiments, and the Government be enabl'd to reduce the Exorbitance of Imagination.

XXVI.

Some Spirits are naturally free in their Conceptions, and others naturally slavish. The former over-rule the latter by an happy Ascendant of Birth; and the latter as easily submit to their Controll, as being of a Genius so precarious and dependant, that they seem born only to take the Impressions that others shall give them, and to make no Step, but as they are led. It was upon this Weakness and Defect that the various Tribes of Philosophers were form'd. Whensoever there arose Men hardy and assuming enough to affect a Superiority, there were never wanting others, timorous and mean enough to acknowledge the new Dominion, and never to think but according to the Standard of their Masters. Nay, some there are so easy, so light, and credulous, as to make the Dreams of other Men the Rule of their own

*Clarus ob
obscuram
linguam.
Lucret.*

Rohault.

*Majorem
fidem adbi-
bent homi-
nes iis quæ
non inte-
ligunt; &
cupidine
ingenii
humani*

libentius obscura creduntur. Plin.

*Cuncta etenim stolidi magis admirantur amantque, Inversis quæ
sub rebus latitantia cernunt. Lucret.*

Reason and Conduct. The Spirit of Slavery possesses their Heart, and their very Thoughts; and they have not Courage enough to preserve the Independence of their own Mind. But, what is still more extraordinary, there are Men of dark, perplex'd Ideas, and of a Genius obscurely profound, who are yet revered as Oracles, and acquire a Sort of an Empire over Mens Judgments, only because they are more peremptory and confident in their Determinations, and owe all their Authority to their Presumption. 'Twas by this means *Paracelsus* advanc'd his Credit in the last Age: He recommended himself by an Affectation of being obscure; and his great Merit, was the saying those Things which none else would say, or could understand. His Boldness in setting up for a Master, engaged some to be his Scholars, and his Doctrine met with those that embrac'd it, as propos'd under the surprizing Air of a mighty Secret. *Descartes* ow'd his Reputation to the like Measures. The perplex'd Answers that he gives to the Objections he has started, are so many new Difficulties to the Reader. We take some Sort of Pleasure in being led from one doubtful Prospect to another, and still without a thorough View. This is an Art by which that Author never fails to take, because 'tis by this he plays the Oracle. His interpreter, who has endeavour'd to render him more intelligible by a new Explication of his Physicks, has robb'd him of Part of his Beauty, by giving him a more easy and familiar Turn. His admirable Genius seems to have been pleas'd with nothing so much, as with the Pains and Difficulty of being apprehended. His obscure Expression

seems

seems more venerably mysterious, and his Character of incomprehensible is the most charming Quality that attracts the Admiration of his Disciples. This affected Intricacy of Doctrine is a Stratagem that some Men employ to gain upon our Simplicity of Belief.

XXVII.

Men of too quick and subtle Spirits are not always the fittest to commence Philosophers. It is better to settle, and, as it were, condensate the Imagination with somewhat gross and filling, than to let it evaporate in nice Speculations. The plain good Sense of *Socrates* triumph'd over all the Art and Cunning of the *Sophists*. Philosophy never becomes abstracted till it ceases to be solid. Men retire to Forms when they have nothing real to advance; and take Shelter in Subtlety, when they despair of carrying an Argument by Simplicity. *Protagoras*, the Inventor of these fallacious Reasonings, and this Tricking in Philosophy, had certainly a false Genius. He was a sharp and formidable Sophist, as *Aulus Gellius* observes, but by no means a just Philosopher. These who would refine upon all Things, says *Seneca*, are in the sure Method of spoiling all Things. Through a vain Ostentation of Wit Men relinquish what is most essential to Knowledge: They weaken the Truth of Things by the Artifice of Words, and fly to Sophistry, when deficient in good Reason. It was by this new Stratagem, that *Nausiphanes* and *Parmenides*, were capable of so much Mischief. It was by this, that *Cleanthes*, *Chrysippus*, and the other *Stoicks*, made a notional King of their wise Man, invested him with

Habet hoc ingenium humanum, ut cum ad solida non suffecerit, in futilibus atteratur.
Verulam. de Aug. Scient. Insincerus quidam philosophus, sed acerrimus sophistarum. L.V. c. 3. Vide quantum malum fecerit nimia subtilitas, & quam infesta sit veritati. Senec.

In his exercitationibus doctores peccant, qui necesse habent cum insipientibus furere. Petron.

Ex verbo-
rum præ-
stigiis &
regna vo-
bis nata
sunt, &
imperia,
& divitiæ,
& tantæ
quidem, ut
omnia quæ
ubique
sunt sapi-
entis esse
dicatis.
de Fin.
Philoso-
phia non
in remedi-
um animi,
sed in ex-
ercitatio-
nem inge-
nii inven-
ta. Senec.
de Ben.

empty Titles of Majesty, and enrich him with Treasures that consisted only in Magnificence of Speech; as *Tully* pleasantly exposes them. Thus, the Purity of Reason was vitiated by the Artifice of Language, and Truth was made the Sport of Wit, which should have been the Object of Veneration. This was the great Fault of the *Spaniards* in the last Age: They practis'd upon Philosophy, as they had done upon Politics; and by the Character of their Genius, which is acute and thoughtful, spun out both into unconceivable Niceties, every Scholar attempting still to refine upon his Master. Hence arose a Disorder, like that which *Seneca* complains of. Philosophy bore no other Fruit than mere Cavil and Disputation; and was no longer consider'd as the Medicine of the Passions; but as the Exercise of the Parts. Let us be satisfied with Wisdom of the common Standard, and take such Reason as passes current with all Mankind. He that would be wiser than the rest of the World, bids fair for the Character of Folly; nor is any Thing more useless in the Conduct of Human Life, than these Cobweb Notions and exquisite Subtilties of Science.

XXVIII.

Ipsa phi-
losophia
multis fu-
it periculi
causa, in-
solenter
tractata.
Idem E-
pist.

Mistaken Philosophy has spoilt many a good Head; and Wisdom misunderstood, has been fertile in the Production of Fools. *Empedocles* had a noble and rais'd Genius: *Lucretius* opposes him to the greatest Men of Antiquity. Yet the Fumes of his Melancholy, aided by too strain'd an Application, and too obstinate Study, cast such a Cloud over his Imagination, and so far

Carmina

quin etiam divini pectoris hujus Vociferantur, Sc. Lucr. l. 1.

Ut cum non amplius appareret, ad celos abiisse putaretur. Lact.

alter

alter'd his Brain, that he was seiz'd with Madness, and, in one of his Fits, throwing himself into *Aetna* was consumed by the Flames. *Horace* tells us, he made this bold Leap in Pursuit of an Apotheosis. *Cornelius Agrippa*, in these later Times, so crazed and enfeebled his Understanding by reading *Plato*, and conversing with the Doctrines of the *Platonick* School, that he grew frantick by his own Confession. *Peter de Apono*, a Physician of *Padua*, under Pope *Clement VII*, by studying the *Arabian* Philosophy, and too frequently contemplating the Astrology of *Alfraganus*, corrupted his Fancy to that Degree, that he was put into the Inquisition, as suspected of Magick. *Pompenatius* and *Cremoninus*, the one Professor at *Padua*, the other at *Pisa*, were transported to Impiety and Atheism, by their unwarrantable Method of philosophical Enquiry; and have left to after Ages the unhappy Monuments of an abus'd Reason and infatuated Mind. It may indeed be affirm'd, that the common Effect of Philosophy in those Days, was no better than meer Libertinism; and 'twas this that gave it so ill a Name; while Men utterly corrupted and debauch'd their Judgment by their unaccountable Means of forming and improving it. In a word, if the best Reason and Wisdom of Mankind is yet capable of Error, to what Extravagances must such Men lay themselves open, as are guided by the false Lights of vain Philosophy, and the wild Sallies of their own weak and capricious Spirit.

XXIX.

We ought to look on him as a good Proficient in Philosophy, that has once discover'd how full of Doubt and Uncertainty those Things are

Deus immortalis haberi, Dum cupit Empedocles, ardentem frigidus Aetnam insiluit. Hor.

Facebant philosophi qui vitam humanam non instrunt sed turbant. Laetant. Nolle omnia scire summa scientia est. Chrysol.

Quæ nequeunt sciri nescire nos confitemur, neque ea vestigare curamus quæ non posse comprehendere liquidissimum est. Arnob. l. 2.

of which he is best appriz'd, and who is content-
 ed to be ignorant of that which he is not in a
 Capacity of knowing. 'Tis by virtue of this
 Reflection that the wisest Men deliver themselves
 with peculiar Modesty and Diffidence: The
 Greatness of their Comprehension renders them
 the more cautious in their Assertions: The more
 Light they have attain'd, the better they are ac-
 quainted with the Darkness and Obscurity of
 their Spirit: The deeper their Reach and Pene-
 tration, the fuller the Discoveries which they
 make of their Weakness, and the greater their
 Suspicion and Distrust of their own Powers.
 Hence *Aristotle* has observ'd that old Men are
 more incredulous and timorous than others;
 because the Use and Experience they have had
 of the Uncertainty of Things, awakens their Cir-
 cumsppection, and holds them upon their Guard.
Socrates was at a loss how to interpret the Oracle,
 that pronounc'd him the Wisest of Men: He
 examin'd and survey'd himself, and could find
 no Title that he had to so glorious an Elogy,
 but his Modesty in Disclaiming it. His Know-
 ledge rendred him sensible of his Ignorance, and
 his Ingenuity prompted him, without Ceremony,
 to confess it. *Epicurus* had good Talents of Na-
 ture, and was a Philosopher in his very Plea-
 sures: 'Tis a Saying of his Brother *Nicocles*, in *Plu-
 tarch*, that Nature had assembled together all
 the Atoms of Sense and Knowledge, to form his
 Understanding, while yet he himself profess'd
 with *Socrates*, that he knew Nothing: his Friends
 were loud in his Commendation; and he was,
 as deaf to their Applause. Besides this Modesty
 which is a Vertue and Accomplishment of the
 greatest Men, there is a Sort of wise and sensi-
 ble Ignorance which, in the Conduct of Life,
 has learnt to doubt of Things, of which it cannot
 cer-

*Cui plura
 nosse da-
 tum est
 cum majo-
 ra dubia
 sequun-
 tur.*

*Æn. Sylv.
 Plutarch.
 de Doctr.
 Epicur.*

certainly be inform'd, to decline the Search of what is past its Discovery, and never to sound unfathomable Depths. For Nature having lock't up some Secrets beyond our View, we owe Her the Respect of shutting our Eyes before her awful Mysteries. There's no Truth or Falshood but what may change its Colours, and outward Appearance: And upon this Uncertainty is founded that Caution and Reserve of wise Men in declaring their Judgments. This is indeed one of the fairest Fruits, and most real Benefits of Philosophy: and we may so far concur with the Opinion of the *Academicks*, as they plac'd the true Reason and supreme Science of Man, in acknowledging the Weakness of his Spirit, and the Instability of his Thought. But when the same Philosophers deny all manner of Credit to the Senses, because 'tis possible they may be de-

ceiv'd, and, because some Things are really dubious, take an Occasion from hence to doubt of all; we ought to give them over as extravagant. True Philosophy observes an equal Distance between these Extremes on both Hands.

Sensus natura certos putamus, hos non pareus, non nutritrix, non magister depravat, Cic. de Leg. Invenies primis à sensibus esse creatam, veri, neque sensus posse repelli. Lucret. Notitiam

XXX.

But if it seems a like Folly to doubt of nothing, or to doubt of all Things; to approve of all Things, or to approve of Nothing, cannot be a greater Argument of Wisdom. 'Tis a Strength of Soul, at which few Men can arrive, to preserve the entire Prerogative of their Judgment, so as never to be over-rul'd either by false Reason, or incompetent Authority. The Presumptuous and Obstinate subscribe to no Assertion; because they will not disparage themselves by yielding: The Light and Inconstant subscribe indifferent-

Qui cito credit levius est corde. Eccclus. 10

Athenis
Gellium
Proconfu-
lem philo-
fophos qui
um erant
convocasse,
ipsique
autorem
fuisse, ut
controver-
fiarum fa-
cerent mo-
dum. Cic.
de Leg.
Foculare
istud qui-
dem, & a
multis de-
risum.
ibid.
Algazel.
Apud quos
tantum
præjudica-
ta opinio
poterat, ut
etiam sine
ratione
valeret
auctoritas.
Cic. de
N. Deor.

ly to any ; because they will not bear the Trouble of enquiring. Always to comply, or always to stand out, is an equal Reflection upon a Man's Sense. The Design of that Proconsul of *Greece*, who summon'd before him all the Masters of the several Sects then famous in *Athens*, and gravely exhorted them to an Agreement, was ridicul'd, as a very signal Absurdity, by *Pomponius Atticus*. But the Project of that *Arabian* Philosopher, who thought to hew down all his Rivals at one Stroke, by his Book intituled, *the Destruction of Philosophy*, seems to me still more ridiculous. *Arverroes* writ in Confutation of this Piece, and sty'd his Answer, *the Destruction of the Destruction*; which is one of the finest Parts of his Works. Indeed, if we take a View of the Method of Human Life and Conduct, we shall judge it to be the last Extravagance for a Man to affect a perpetual Suspence of Judgment, and to stand obstinately neuter, between the Variety of Truths and Falsities, universally acknowledg'd or decried. 'Tis certainly an Argument of Weakness to hang upon other Men's Lips, and to be a Slave to their Opinions : But it seems a more dangerous Estate to hover in habitual Scepticism, and by a Pride of Spirit, to resist that natural Bent and Inclination which Man has to be convinc'd by Truth, and concluded by Reason. Nor, on the other Hand, am I in Love with that blind Submission which *Pythagoras* requires of his Scholars ; who argued only on the Foot of his Authority, and made his Words the sacred Test and Standard of Truth. This imperious Management of Profelytes is fitter to break, and subvert Mens Spirits, than to edifie and improve them. For, truly speaking, a Man's Freedom consists in the Right he has to judge of Things according to his own Views ; and the Use of his Reason is

the

the most valuable Part of his Property. These Violences are highly blameable in a Philosopher, whose Attention ought to be fixt upon impartial Truth. And yet some Wits are of such a craving Temper as always to want new Food and Matter, to keep them in Action: Any Thing goes down with them, even to false Ideas, groundless Imaginations, and chimerical Designs: Rather than let their Thoughts lie fallow, they exercise them upon the Dreams and Visions of other Men, as being unable to supply them with Inventions and Amusements of their own Growth. And this Fault betrays Men into another of no less pernicious Consequence, an easie Credulity. Let us carefully avoid these Irregularities: Let us be as diligent in Examining what is doubtful, as in Embracing what is certain: Let us never hold out against Evidence, and never build upon Conjecture: Let us in all Points, consult Reason and good Sense, as the sure Guides to Truth, and the unerring Means of Information.

*Periculoso-
sum est
credere &
non crede-
re. Phæd.
Fab.
Ipsa con-
suetudo
assensendi
periculosa
videtur
& lubri-
ca. Cic.*

XXXI.

If we examine the Motives by which the greatest Part of Philosophers are determin'd to their peculiar Sect, we shall find that Philosophy has the least Share in them. 'Tis often by Prevention of Age, or Accident, without Deliberation, or Choice, and sometimes without Thought, that they embrace one Opinion rather than another. Men come to agree in the same Persuasion, by the Habit they wear, the Nation to which they belong, the Company they keep; by the Way of Life that first engages them, by the Society that first gains and possesses them, by the Multitude that carries them along, by the Stream that bears them down; and by any Considerations, except those of

of Reason and Wisdom. Thus they submit to the Tyranny of Prepossession, as not having Strength of Judgment to stem and resist it: They abandon their own Sense, to follow other Mens Fancies: They pursue with Passion what they have undertaken without Reason; and defend with the utmost Temerity what they first embraced by mere Chance and Prevention. And when they have once fixt, they make it a Point of Honour to maintain their Ground. Nay, it sometimes happens, that the Animosity and Contention of Parties, sharpens the dullest Wits; and Vexation supplies the Place of Understanding. But thus rashly and fortuitously to make our selves the Properties and Accessions of other Mens Conceits, has so very ridiculous an Air, that 'tis better to be any Thing than such a Tool of a Philosopher. Between these Oppositions of Science, we ought to stand in our own Defence, and not tamely to yield upon the bare Summons of any Party. For such an ungrounded and precarious Philosophy, is a Dis-temper of Mind, and a mere intellectual Debauch.

Nihil sentire melius est quam sam prava sentire.

Cic. Qu. Acad.

XXXII.

Truth is so hardly beset, and brought under such a State of Persecution, by the false Colours of the Age, that few Men have Ingenuity enough to speak their Mind, or Resolution enough to be sincere. It requires a good Degree of Courage to be a Philosopher in good earnest. Nay, it shews an uncommon Greatness of Soul, never to speak but what we think, and never to think but what we dare to speak. This was the Character given by *Quintilian* of the Roman *Brutus*; *Sciam eum sentire quæ dicit*, You may perceive that he speaks from his Heart: The greater, therefore, the Loss of that excellent Treatise of *Virtue*, which he compos'd

compos'd: A moral Piece from so great an Hand, and from so noble and ingenuous a Temper, must needs have been adorn'd with all the Perfections of Beauty. No Man ever deliver'd himself with more Openness and Freedom: And in this Excellence he propos'd *Socrates* for his Pattern, whose Principle it was never to disguise his Thoughts. Men cannot speak against their Conscience, without betraying their Weakness. Interest, Passion, Headiness, Prepossession, Custom, and worldly Dependencies, are the common Obstacles to the Purity and Sincerity of our Judgments. 'Tis by some such foolish Biass that we are carried out of our own Sentiments, to fall in at a Venture, with those of others: And it always argues a Baseness of Mind and a slavish Complaisance, to govern our Opinion by the Impressions of those who are Masters of our Fortune, and whom we are engaged in Policy to please. Indeed, the best Philosophy is the Art of Living; or the knowing how to accommodate our selves to Times, Persons and Things, as Reason shall advise. But then, this Management must be free and unconstrain'd; unless we would imitate those mean Spirits, who maintain their Thoughts upon a borrow'd Fund; and who are so little, that they can stoop to an outward Compliance with such Opinions as they cannot inwardly approve; only for Want of Force to assert the Privilege of their Reason. Such a servile Philosophy, stands at the utmost Distance from true Wisdom. We have a notorious Example of it, in those Senators under *Tiberius* and *Nero*, mention'd by *Tacitus*; who after having prostituted themselves to the most infamous Flatteries, put on the Mask of Philosophy, to shelter themselves from publick Justice; being too much

much Cowards to shew a true philosophical Spirit, or even to give a free Vote in the House.

XXXIII.

Disputation is an Art of the Schools, to awaken the Powers of younger Minds, and to exercise their growing Wit. It is highly useful in displaying Reason to those who could not otherwise apprehend its Force, and in stopping the Mouths of vain Cavillers: But then it may be abused to the feeding of Contention, to the disguizing and colouring over the worst of Passions, to the maintaining of an obstinate Temper in spite of Truth and Sense. There is no Philosopher, but may acquire a Readiness and Facility by this Method. For every good Manager of an Argument, is in a Condition to defend his Thesis by Noise and Stratagem, when he is at a loss for Reason. In a Word, this, as all other Things, may be either good or bad, according as 'tis applied. And therefore, without presuming to condemn it, let us content our selves with imploying it in good Service. At the same time we should endeavour to open Men's Eyes, that it may not pass a Deception upon them, when perverted from its genuine Use. The Ground of most Disputes is, that the Parties don't understand one another. *Thales* declar'd against a *Vacuum*; which *Democritus* admitted without Scruple: Let both explain themselves on the Point, and both will be agreed. *Epicurus* relied upon the Testimony of Sense in all things; *Empedocles* would trust it in nothing: The Dispute would drop, if they could once come to a Resolution about the Nature of that Error of Sense, which sometimes defeats its Testimony. If we could explain to *Descartes* the true Nature of Sensation, he would make no Diffi-

culty

culty of allowing an *Horse* to be an Animal. There has been a Debate among learned Men, of about three hundred Years length, concerning Liberty; only because they have not stated its Definition: If we can shew Philosophers and Divines in what it properly consists, they will speak but one Language about it. For all Disputes are brought to a speedy Issue, when Men are guided by Reason, and are agreed upon Principles. The wide Diversity of Opinions that reigns in the World, is entirely owing to the different Ways of Mens Speaking and Thinking. Which occasion'd that Remark of *Aristotle*, that when two Men of Sense and Learning are divided in Judgment, the usual Case is, that they express themselves after a various Manner, and the Contest lies rather in the Words, than in the Things.

XXXIV.

Tho' the Philosophy and Method of Disputation, now follow'd in the Schools, has been very severely censur'd by *Peter Ramus*, about the End of the last Century; by *Gassendus* at the Beginning of this, and in general, by all the modern Naturalists, of eminent Note and Distinction; because the Masters of it have really alter'd the Purity of *Aristotle's* Doctrine, which they profess to maintain; yet I cannot but conceive it to be still most agreeable to the present Manner of Life, and most proper for the Institution of Youth, at that Age when it is commonly recommended to their Study. Because after all, it imprints upon the Mind a Character of Order and Regularity, and a Justness of Thought; it teaches us to reduce the Subjects we treat of to certain Principles; and consequently to discourse upon them by Rule and Method: It exercises younger Wits, by the Subtilties of Logick and

and Metaphysics, in the only Way of Improvement of which they are capable: It presents them with but a Specimen and Abridgment of moral Doctrine, as not thinking them mature and firm enough to sustain a long Series of Conclusions; which seems too grave an Employment for the active Heat and Vigour of Youth: and lastly, because these early Years have too little Experience to take delight in a strict Contemplation of Nature, and too little Capacity to embrace the vast Extent of human Things. Yet it were indeed to be wish'd, that this Part of Philosophy were display'd more methodically in the Schools, and carried on thro' a Train of the most important Experiments and Observations. But so it often happens, that Masters affect to teach Things merely useless, that they may be thought not to forget such as are necessary. The Method now in use is certainly capable of greater Perfection; but this Perfection must arise from the Genius and Temper of its Professors, when they shall once lay aside the Consideration of Things indifferent, and apply themselves only to such as are necessary and essential, according to the best Light that Experience holds out to them. But as Matters stand, we can expect no advantageous Change, nor any well concerted Measures of Reformation. Besides, it is highly probable, that civil Laws, which permit no Innovating in Things universally establish'd, would authorize no other Method but that which is follow'd in the Universities, for fear of giving too wide a Liberty to the Passion which Men naturally have for new Opinions, and which, if left to its Course, might prove of dangerous Consequence to a well regulated State: Especially if it be likewise consider'd, that Philosophy is one of those

Means

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Means and Instruments which Religion it self makes use of in the Defence and Explication of its Doctrines; as we shall see in the Close of this Discourse.

These are the Reflections that may be made upon the Use of Philosophy in General. Let us proceed to take a View of its Parts as they stand distinctly from each other.

LOGIC

RE-

REFLECTIONS UPON LOGICK.

I.

*Ars vera
& falsa
dijudican-
di Cic. de
Orat.
Dialectica
veri &
falsi dis-
ceptatrix
& iudex.
Cic. Qu.
Acad.*

Logick may be truly stil'd the first Ray of Evidence, the first Stroke of Method that appears in the Conduct of Knowledge: As being employ'd in forming the Judgment, which is the ordinary Instrument that the Mind of Man makes use of, to reason justly upon Things, and to pass an exact Discernment between Truth and Falshood, by dividing Simples from Compounds, and Contingents from Necessaries. And as this Art is the Source and Fountain of all our Certainty, there can be little Assurance in our Reasonings without its Support and Aid. The Business of Logick therefore is, to assist us in the Discovery of Truth, and to make us feel the Force of Reason. But this excellent Rule assum'd a Character of Falshood from the Genius of those that first employ'd it. This pure and uncorrupted Light was soon vitiated and obscur'd; and Human Reason which had submitted to its Guidance, was led astray by its Abuse. Thus Logick, which was invented to fix and rectifie the Understanding help'd to seduce and pervert it; and the first

Precepts that were given to lead Men to Knowledge, were but so many Snares to betray them into Error. For as nothing is more Secret than Thought, so Logick was at first nothing else but an Art of variously disguising our Thoughts; as appears from the History of its Rise and Fortune in the World.

II.

The first Philosophers, who practis'd Reason more than Argument, were so entirely bent on the Study of Nature, as to have little regard to Logical Speculations: They reason'd upon their own Experience, and yet were Strangers to the Art and Method of Reasoning. In *Pythagoras's* School, there was no Logick but Authority; no Appeal from what he pleas'd to dictate. Indeed *Apuleius* pretends, that *Plato* borrow'd his first Draught of Logick from the *Pythagoreans*. But *Aristotle* assures us, that tho' we meet with good and just Definitions in the Writings of that Sect, yet Logick was then unknown, and its Rules uncultivated. *Zeno Eleates*, a Philosopher of a very quick and subtile Genius, was the first who found out that natural Train of Principles and Consequences in Discourse, which he form'd into a regular Art: As appears from the Testimony of *Plato*, confirm'd by *Proclus*. Thus it is plain, that the Sum of *Zeno's* Logick was to observe the Dependence and Connexion that Propositions bear to each other, and accordingly to range them in their natural Order. This was his Way; he explain'd himself only in Dialogue, and Introduc'd two or more Persons, who by their Course of Questions and Answers, reason'd methodically upon all Subjects: And 'twas from this Method of Dialogue, that he gave his new invented Art the Name of *Dialectica*; and this put a Period to the more ancient

Platonem à Pythagoricis intellectualium Philosophia partem accepisse. De Phil. Plat. In Metaphys.

In Parmen. Interp. Parm.

Way of teaching Philosophy in Verse. For it was found very practicable in these Dialogues to preserve an Air of Freedom and Pleasantry, without the least Prejudice to what was solid and substantial. *Plato* follow'd this Manner, as the fittest for Instruction: The Custom being, for the Master to interrogate the Scholar, and to make the Scholar reply, according to his Capacity. *Zeno*, a great Master of Subtilty, did but perplex and embarrass this Method, by giving it too nice and captious an Air. *Protagoras*, Scholar to *Zeno*, as *Zeno* had been to *Democritus*, still refin'd upon it, and carried it farther into Sophistry. For having nothing solid in his Genius, he studied to be subtile, and took up with the Profession of a Sophist, not being able to attain to that of a Philosopher. *Aristotle* informs us, that his Business was to prepare common Places of Questions and Answers, and by this Knack to surprize and non-plus his Hearers. *Simon* the famous Artisan of *Athens*, so often mention'd in *Socrates's* Discourse, together with his Friend *Crito*, are reported by *Diogenes Laertius* to have been both eminent Logicians, and both of *Zeno's* School.

III.

Euclid of *Megara*, still applied himself to the farther improving and sharpening of Logical Subtilty, and introduc'd a greater Warmth of Discourse, a more lively and vehement Manner of Debate. Nay, he carried this to such an Extreme, as to give Occasion to *Timon* to reproach him as having possess'd the People of *Megara*, with a Madness of Disputing, by teaching them this sophistical and crafty Method, which *Socrates* condemn'd, as void of Sincerity. It was this *Euclid* and his Scholar *Eubulides*, that invented those Sophisms, which *Diogenes Laertius* mentions,

Ἀντιστα
 βεσιμῶ.
 Ramus
 Dialect.

tions, and which were afterwards so much celebrated in the Schools; tho' after all, they have nothing real in them, but their Acuteness; such as the *Dilemma*, the *Argumentum cornutum*, the *Electra*, the *Sorites*, the famous *Quæstiones Megareses*, of which *Plutarch* speaks; together with all that Chicane of Dispute, that brought *Logick* under Contempt at *Athens*, and obliged *Socrates* to expose and ridicule it, in his Discourses against the Sophists, in order to the Undeceiving the Minds of the People. From the same *Euclid*, *Demosthenes* learnt his Art of *Dilemma*, and those pressing ways of Address, which rendred him so forcible in his Character of Eloquence. *Plato's* Logick, which is the same with that of *Socrates*, consists more in Examples than in Precepts: It has nothing peculiar as to the disputative Part, of which *Socrates* had but a very mean Opinion: Tho' both the one and the other of those great Men establish'd the first Criterion of Truth in the Senses; yet they maintain'd that the Understanding was still the supreme Judge, and as such ought to determine our Assent; because it was this alone, that did not rest in the Surface, but pierced to the bottom of Things, which they suppos'd to be in it self eternal and immutable: This they call'd the *Idea*, and fix'd it as the only Rule and Standard of our Conceptions. And because in their Notion, the Soul of Man was but a little Spark of the universal Soul of the World, and a Ray of the Divinity; they taught, that this divine Particle while united to its Principle, the great Fountain of Light, was ignorant of nothing; but that upon its entrance into the Body, it contracted such

Ita falsa est ars disserendi quam minime probabat Socrates. Cic. Qu. Acad. Mentem volebant esse rerum judicem; censebant idoneam cui crederetur quia cerneret id quod esset simplex unitus modis

Et quale esset, hanc illi ideam appellabant. Id. ibid.

Carpenter in Alcinooum.

Cic. in Top.

Quint. l. v. c. II.

Inductione plurimum usus est Socrates.

ibid. Interrogationibus

Socraticis cavendum ne incaute respondeas.

Ibid.

Socrates ita disputat ut nihil affirmet ipse, refellat alios.

Cic. Qu. Acad.

Obstare visis, & assensusque suos firmè sustinere. Id. *ibid.*

almost

an Alliance with Ignorance and Impurity, as 'twas the Business of Logick to clear and refine. *Alcinous*, a very accurate Expositor of *Plato's* Logick, tells us, that this Philosopher made use of Division, Definition and Induction, as Steps by which to arrive at the first and original Source of Truth, whence his Principles are drawn, as the sure Method to think and speak wisely of all Things; and that this was the way that he usually practised. *Division* was a Step whereby to ascend from sensible Things to Intellectual: *Definition* was a Passage from Things demonstrated, to Things undemonstrated: *Introduction* was a Means of discovering Truth by presuppos'd Principles. Thus by *Division* he proceeded to *Definition*; by *Definition* to *Introduction*; by *Introduction* to *Demonstration*. And *Diogenes* assures us, that *Plato's* most common Way of Demonstrating, was by Induction. *Cicero* and *Quintilian* agree in the same Report. Yet it is to be confess'd, that *Socrates*, in his Manner of reasoning, applied himself more to Questions than Answers; because the Character of his Genius was fitter to raise Doubts than to resolve them. On the whole, it appears from these Principles of Logick, advanced by *Socrates* and *Plato*, that affirming all Truth to be seated in Ideas, they with their whole School, in effect, professed themselves to know nothing; because there is no Judgment to be made of singular and individual Things, but by the Senses, which they own'd to be fallacious. And therefore *Plato's* Followers, made it their great logical Rule to embrace nothing with too easie a Belief, and to preserve the entire Liberty of their Judgment amidst the Uncertainties which occur'd upon

almost all Subjects. Upon this leading Maxim, ^{*Ancor-*} of the general Incomprehensibility of Things, <sup>*an-
tis.*</sup> was grounded the Reformation of the Academy, under *Lacides* and *Arcefilas*; as also the Rise of the *Pyrrhonian* Sect, who doubted of the most infallible Truths. The *Academicks* comprehended thus much, that Things were really incomprehensible: but even this was above the Comprehension of the *Pyrrhonians*. This was the Logick of *Plato*, and this its Effect, in the Conduct of human Understanding.

IV.

We meet with nothing fix'd and regular in Logick, before *Aristotle*. This mighty Genius, ^{*Aristoteles*} so replenish'd with Understanding and Reason, ^{*utriusque*} obtain'd a perfect Knowledge of the Mind of ^{*partis Di-*} Man; survey'd all its Springs, and nicely distin- ^{*alectica*} guish'd its various Operations. No Man had ^{*princeps.*} ever yet founded that vast Abyss of human Thought, to make a Judgment of its Depth. *Aristotle* was the first that discover'd this new Way of arriving at Science by the Evidence of Demonstration, and of proceeding to such Demonstration, in a geometrical Method, by the infallible Rule of Syllogism; the most accomplish'd Work, and the greatest Effort of Spirit, that Man is capable of exerting. This is the Sum of *Aristotle's* Logick, the Method of which is so firm and constant, that 'tis by it alone, we can attain to any absolute Certainty, in our Reasonings; as being the just Rule of all our Operations, and the true Art of Thinking. But by what Way did he arrive at this Art; or what measures did he put in practice, thus to fix the Mind of Man, which is naturally light, and upon the Wing, and to render it unshaken in its Judgment? It was necessary for him, at his Entrance upon this great Work to take away

all Manner of Ambiguity in Expression, to turn the incomplete Reasonings of Human Understanding into a perfect Demonstration, and yet to build this upon so unstable a Bottom as the Weakness of Word and Thought; and to bestow the Strength and Stedfastness of Science upon the most wandering and uncertain Subject that can be conceiv'd. In the Pursuit of this Design, he was to March through ways hitherto untraced and inaccessible; he was to divest our Thought, of all the various Dresses and changing Colours that our Expressions could give it, and to dissipate all the Clouds that the Imagination could spread before the Understanding. 'Tis with this View, that in his Book of *Interpretation*, which is a Kind of a *Grammatica Rationis*, he examines the Powers and Signification of Words, that in his *Categories*, he states the true Notion of Terms, and by reducing them to their natural Sense, prepares them for the Uses of Definition and Division; that in his *Analyticks* he establishes the Rules for the *Modal* Conversion of all Sorts of Propositions, and for the different Figures of Syllogism, the chief Foundations of which he lays in three of his logical Maxims: and this whole Frame and Construction is purely new and his own Work. In his Book of *Interpretation*, he settles the Rule of contradictory Propositions: His *Categories* are so many Dispositions and Steps toward Demonstration: In his Books of *Analyticks*, his Remarks are so many Demonstrations, and his Demonstrations so many Principles. His *Topicks* are the Heads or common Places of *dialectical*, or probable Arguments. His *Elenchi* contain the Ground and Origin of all imaginable Sophisms. The two Rules he lays down for the perfect Composition of Syllogism, are,

*Diffum de
omni, &
dictum de
nullo.*

*Ea quæ
sunt ea-
dem uni
tertio,
sunt ea-
dem inter
se.*

*Contradi-
ctoria si-
mul esse
non pos-
sunt.*

are, that there must be nothing false in the Matter, and nothing vitious in the Form. His Style is wholly free from those Languors which we sometimes meet with in *Plato*, and from the loose and diffus'd Manner of the Age; but is close, vigorous and concise. In a word, his purely geometrical Method of Demonstrating has ever been look'd on as so accomplish'd, that it has been follow'd by all learned Men in all Sciences, as the most just and solid, and the most agreeable to the natural Course of Reason. And his Construction of Syllogism, which is peculiarly *Aristotle's Logick*, is so complete in its Kind, that it can admit of no Addition or Diminution, but for the worse. He that is happy in a sound Sense and right Judgment, can bear no other Manners, nor any other Principles of Reasoning, but those of *Aristotle*. And because the World being governed by Opinion, commonly disputes against Reason; the most knowing and intelligent Ages, have chiefly distinguish'd themselves from others, by the Veneration they have had for this Logick. For, to say the Truth, what he has perform'd in order to the fixing and rectifying of Reason, by cutting off all Equivocation in Terms, and Confusion in Thought, is one of the greatest Master-pieces of human Wit. Yet it must be confess'd, that the chief Aim and Scope of this Logick, is not so much to teach Men the Art of true Reasoning, which they naturally know, as to give them Rules for the Tryal and Scrutiny of false Reasonings, and for the Guarding against the Sophisms of *Zeno* and *Parmenides*. For in *Aristotle's* Time, the Sophists had set up, and brought into Vogue, a false Method of Reasoning, which he applies himself to detect and defeat. This is the great Idea, upon which the whole

*Aristotele
nemo nervosior in
scribendo.
Cic. in Brut.*

Design of his Logick turns, and all his Wisdom in giving Laws to an Art, which is to give Laws to all besides.

*Ea quæ
dialectici
docent à
stoicis in-
venta.*

*Cic. de
Fin.*

*Chrysippus
ut ad in-
ventionem
sufficeret,
Helleboro
animum
deersit.*

Perron.

*Stoicorum
in diale-
cticis cura
omnis con-
sumitur.*

*Cic. decl.
Orat.*

*Stoicorum
ignoras
quàm sub-
tile sit &
spinosum
dicendi*

*genus. Cic
de Fin.*

The Exercise of Logick was prosecuted with so much Vigour in Zeno's School, that the Stoicks refined more upon it than all the other Sects of Philosophers. Perhaps the Difficulty which they found in maintaining their wild and visionary Morals obliged them to make up in Subtilty of Speech, what they wanted in Solidity of Doctrine. And therefore, to the Artifice of Zeno Eleates, the Chicane of Euclid of Megara, and the wise Address of Socrates, they added all the Stratagem of Cleanthes and Chrysippus, both celebrated Logicians, to compleat their new System. It was to this, as Tully observes, that they applied the whole Bent of their Mind and Study; to support their false Philosophy by an artificial Reason, while defective in that which is true and natural. They seem to have arm'd themselves with all the Thorns and Briars of Logick, to fence off their Adversaries; and to have commenc'd the most formidable Wranglers of the Schools, only to uphold the vain and extravagant Boasts of their precarious Wisdom. They made no material Change in the Logick of Aristotle; but only inforced the Art of Syllogism, (which was so familiar to them) with a more vehement Air, with short, and lively, and pressing Interrogations, which added a considerable Strength to their Method of Argument. The tricking Humour, which so generally prevail'd in their Sect, inclin'd them to sharpen all their Logick into the Cavils of Dispute; and, in order to this, to invent new Modes of Syllogism, less natural than those of Aristotle, but more cunning and captious. They pretend, that

Chrysippus

Chrysippus writ no less than Three hundred Volumes upon this Art: But *Seneca* has observ'd, that his Refinements serv'd only to break and enervate its masculine Spirit. He, and his Successors, were they that first brought up the Use of *formal* and *virtual* Distinctions. Their Vivacity of Genius, indulg'd too largely to the Imagination, which always represents Things beyond their natural Proportions, by giving too much Force and Power to Words. Names, and the Significations of Names, were the great and only Subject of their Debates. And thus they became the first Founders and Authors of that Philosophy which was reviv'd by the *Nominalists*, so many Ages after; At least, there was a near Resemblance between these two Sects, in their Way of overstraining the Niceties of Terms. But this Logick, which was scarce any better than merely verbal, rendred the *Stoicks* extremely slight and superficial, and made their Philosophy hang upon their Lips. However, *Aristotle's* Logick, together with the rest of his Works, being conceal'd from the Publick, the Logick of *Zeno* was chiefly in Vogue with the following Ages, and one of the first that was taught at *Rome*; the Subtilties of which *Plautus* expos'd with so much Humour in his Comedies; as *Cicero* afterwards did in many Places of his Works: The *Stoicks* having by this Affectation, made themselves ridiculous to the Wisdom of the *Romans*.

VI.

Epicurus took up a Method of Reasoning, less artificial than that of *Zeno*, but more fine and delicate. The Censure which *Tully* has pass'd upon him, of his despising Logick, will hold true.

In eâ philosophiâ parte quæ Logica dicitur, Epicurus planè inermis & nudus est; nihil de dividendo ac partiendo docet. Idem. Ibid.

true

*Chrysippus
enervavit
virilem
philosophiam suis
argutiis.
Senec.*

*Stoicis
verba reperienda
sunt, impo-
nendaque
nova novis
rebus nomina.
Cic. de Fin.*

*Zeno eorum
primus
tam rerum
inventor
fuit, quam
novorum
verborum.
Ibid.*

*In Afinar.
in Rud.
in Pseudol.*

*dialectica.
contemnit
Epicurus.
Cic. de
Fin.*

Ex Diog.
Laer. Lu-
cret. Plu-
tarch. &
Gassend.

true only with regard to the Logick of the *Stoicks*, which indeed he could not approve of, as being too full of Nicety and Quirk. *Epicurus* set about this Work with greater Simplicity. The analytical Method of Division and of Argumentation, was unknown to him; and this Defect rendred him weak and little in Disputes. His Search of Truth proceeded only by the Senses, which he term'd the first and natural Light of Mankind. This was his first and fundamental Rule, as the Reflection upon the Judgment of Sense was his second. As he acknowledged Two Sorts of Truth, the one Natural, the other Moral, so his Principle was, that we should distinguish by the Senses what is real in Nature, and by the Appetite, (or the Way of the Heart) what is good and convenient for our Estate, which latter he term'd moral Truth. This was the Sum of his Doctrine: The three leading Maxims of it were as follow:

I. That the Senses cannot be deceiv'd, because the Impression which they take from the Object must always be true, as consisting in a *Sensible Species*; but that the Reasonings of the Soul upon this Impression are capable of Falseness.

II. That the Opinion which we form of any Sensation, may indifferently be either true or false.

III. That 'tis true when the Judgment of Sense proceeds upon the represented Species, without Obstacle, and with such an Evidence, as Reason cannot controul or resist; but that it may be false when defective in this Evidence.

These are the main Axioms of *Epicurus's* Logick upon which he founds the different Reasoning

of the Soul, fram'd by Vertue of the Sympathy that there is between the Understanding and the Sense. He says, 'tis in Strength of these Notices which the Soul receives from the Senses, that it forms its Doubt or Opinion, its Obscurity or Evidence, the respective Character of which is in this manner stamp'd upon it. To proceed; that Way of anticipated Knowledge, which he stiles *Presumption*, is according to him but the Idea of singular Things, reunited in their universal and common Notion: And hence he draws the Rule of Definition, which he looks upon as the only Method of Science. By the Help of these several Principles, he establish'd a more natural Way of Reasoning than the other Philosophers. The Simplicity of his Logick was in a good Measure owing to the Clearness of the Terms; he being of Opinion, that the common Source of all Disputes was the Ambiguity of Propositions. Thus he resolv'd all Fallacies and Sophisms by the bare Explication of the Words; concluding, that when once Men understand one another, and are not merely stupid, they must of necessity be agreed. That Over-balance of Authority which he allow'd to the Senses, may indeed seem a very uncertain Way of coming to any perfect Knowledge of Truth. But he labours to rectify the Default of this Principle, by using the utmost Precaution in all his Reasonings: And *Lucretius*, who explains his Doctrine in Verse, has, in his fourth Book, propos'd no less than fourteen Objections against the Judgment of Sense, and given a satisfactory Answer to them all. In a word, a Soundness and Simplicity of Sense, assisted with some natural Reflection, was all the Art of *Epicurus*: He was not so curious in

Πρόληψις.
Ex Diog.
Laert.

Eò rem di-
mittit E-
picurus, si
unusensus
semel in
vitâ men-
titus sit,
nulli un-
quam esse
credendum
Cic. Acad
Qu.

Doleo stoicos nostros Epicureis irridendi sui dedisse facultatem. Id. de Fin.
Modes

Modes and Formalities as the *Stoicks*, who by that Nicety laid themselves open to the Contempt of him and his Tribe.

VII.

When the Writings of *Aristotle*, which had lain hid for so many Ages, were once discovered, and the World was made acquainted with his Method, it was this alone that was generally follow'd in After-times, as the most solid and certain; because the Art of Thinking and of Discoursing appear'd there in its highest Perfection, by the Invention of Syllogism, and was incapable of the least Improvement by all the Study and Meditation of his Successors. *Galen*, who had entertain'd some different Notions of the Art of Logick, at length acquiesc'd in that of *Aristotle*, and contributed, largely to its Fame; while that additional Figure of Syllogism which he before had invented, was ever look'd on as an indirect Method of Argumentation. *Alexander Aphrodiseus*, *Simplicius*, *Ammenius*, and *Philoponus*, among the *Greeks*; *Apuleius*, *S. Austin*, *Boethius*, *Thomas Aquinas*, and many others of the *Latins*, together with the *Arabians*, studied *Aristotle's* Logick, as the great Pattern and Original. Nay, we may affirm, that there was never any Thing rationally advanc'd upon this Art, but what *Aristotle* had first thought of; and that there has been scarce one new Discovery made in the universal Oeconomy of the Operations of the Mind, since the time that he wrote. It was, likewise, upon this excellent Model that the *Schoolmen* form'd their Character, who reign'd with so long and so absolute a Sway. It is true, they fell into a Division of *Nominalists* and *Realists*; but both these Parties proceeded in their Debates upon the Principles of *Aristotle*. I shall say nothing of the System of

Raimundus

Raimundus Lullius, which is but a cabbalistick Jargon, a Ranging of Words without Things, wholly groundless and precarious; an Art to pronounce at all Adventures, upon all Subjects, and to discourse very plentifully in the Air: In short, 'tis an Imitation of that extravagant Scheme which *Peter Montuus* pretended to have copied exactly from *Abezebron*, an Arabian Philosopher, fit, as he conceiv'd, to demolish *Anti-christ* at his appearing. From this fine Original *Raimundus Lullius* took the Draught of his Logick, which is only capable of making Fools or Madmen. About two hundred Years since, *Laurentius Valla* undertook to reform the *Aristotelian* Logick, by reducing the ten Prædicaments to Three, and by cutting off the third Figure of Syllogism. But this bold Enterprize did not succeed, nor found any to second it. *Ludovicus Vives* attempted another sort of Reformation, not so much in respect of *Aristotle*, as of the Schoolmen, but with no better Success. Nor did *Peter Ramus* meet with greater Encouragement in his Design of Ruining the Credit of *Aristotle*, by Help of the Memoirs of *Valla* and *Vives*. For the Plan which he form'd of a new Logick, has nothing rational in it, but what he borrow'd from that of *Aristotle*, which he spoilt in presuming to mend it. *Cardan* compos'd a Logick upon the joynt Stock of *Aristotle*, *Hippocrates*, *Euclid*, *Ptolomy*, and *Galen*; but this Work had nothing valuable in it, besides the geometrical Method of *Aristotle*, which the Compiler was so wise as to transcribe.

VIII.

As for the Judgment that may be pass'd on the modern Logicians: *Bacon's Organum* is by no means a regular Piece; it consists of a Number of particular Remarks, and those very curious,

ous, which are owing to the Author's vehement Desire of signalizing himself by new Conceptions, and of saying what none had said before him. Nothing can be less solid, than those four *Images*, which he sets up for the Principles of all Things. He is constantly upon the Metaphor, and scarce ever speaks of Things according to their natural Import. He seems to have been entirely a Stranger to the geometrical Way of Reasoning in Use with the Schoolmen. But the *Spaniards*, who have the Advantage of other Nations in grave Reflection, refin'd so strongly upon Logick in the last Age, as to alter the Purity of natural Reason by the Subtilties of their Argumentation, and by falling into empty and abstracted Notions, void of all Reality. Their Philosophers found out a Way to be Masters of Reason in spite of good Sense, and to give some Sort of Colour and Out-side to the most extravagant Assertions. And by this means their Debates were so fill'd with the Chicane of vain Contention, as to serve for nothing but to raise the Choler, and to blacken the Blood. *Smiglesius*, a Jesuit of *Poland*, is one of the last that has written on *Aristotle's* Logick, with a just Mixture of Subtilty and Solidity. His very sagacious Spirit has sounded the Depth of this Art, with so much Justness and Clearness, as is scarce to be parallel'd in any other Author. His Logick is an admirable Work. The rest of the Modern Philosophers have applied themselves rather to Physicks than Logick. But nothing can be more extravagant than *Vanbelmont's* logical Treatise, in which he pretends to overthrow the whole *Aristotelian* System, without any Ground to support his own. *Descartes* began a Logick, which he left unfinish'd: Some Fragments of it are still in the Hands of his Disciples,

ples, under this Title, *Of Erudition*. There are some Strokes of Logick in his Method, where he tells us, That the Mind of Man being finite, it ought to begin with the Consideration of simple Objects, and then gradually to accustom it self to the Knowledge of compound Things, and the Art of distinguishing them from each other. He says, If we would make a right Discernment between Truth and Falshood, we must divest our selves of Prejudices, by learning first to doubt of all Things. His Principle, *I think, therefore I am*, which he lays down as the first evident and sensible Truth, upon a close Examination will appear to be somewhat defective: For since the Proposition, *I think*, resolves it self into this other, *I am thinking, I am, therefore I am*, will make but a frivolous Repetition. After all, as he is the best Notionalist of the Moderns, what he delivers, how new soever, is not ill conceiv'd, but discovers that Depth of Meditation which was his peculiar Excellence. But nothing is more immethodical than his Discourse of Method. 'Tis a Medley of Morality, Physicks, and Metaphysicks, that scarce asserts or establishes any one Doctrine. Yet we find in it some Marks of Sincerity, which shew us the true Character of his Genius; especially, where he makes that very ingenuous Confession, "That the only Advantage to be acquired by Philosophy, is the Art of Speaking probably of all Things, and of raising the Admiration of such as know less than our selves." *Campbell's* Logick is confus'd and perplex'd, as being form'd upon the Model of the *Averroists*, which he too strictly copied. But, to conclude this Subject, we may affirm, That of the modern Treatises of Logick, the most accomplish'd in all its Parts, is that which *Peter Mounyer*, a Physician

sician of *Grenoble*, has publish'd on the Works of *Honoratus Faber*, the Jesuit. What he has written on the Art of Syllogism and Consequence, which is his main Business, is an Original in its kind: No Man has ever carried these Speculations farther, or has more exhausted the Matter, by reciting the almost infinite Modes and Connexions of the Syllogistick Terms. But let us pass on to the Consideration of *Moral Philosophy*, as a Doctrine of less Obscurity and greater Reality.

R E.

REFLECTIONS UPON MORALITY.

I.

AS Logick teaches us to think and speak, *Una pars philosophiae differt, aliter vivendi, aliter vivendi.* so Morality, or Ethick, teaches us to live: The one is employ'd in directing the Conceptions, the other in regulating the Desires of the Soul. *Democritus* was the first of the philosophick Order that began with Wonder to reflect, how Man, being ignorant of Himself, should yet engage his Curiosity in studying the heavenly Bodies. This latter was the whole Business of the Philosophers before *Socrates*, who first applied himself to the forming of the Manners. *Pythagoras* had indeed given him a Specimen of this Design, who deduc'd the Rules of Morality from the Observation of Nature. This Part of Knowledge, which *Pythagoras* learned by his Converse with the *Egyptian* Priests, was not his first Inclination, yet 'twas what suited very well with his Genius, and was accordingly prosecuted by him. The great Aim and Tendency of his moral Doctrine was to purge the Mind from the Impurities of the Body, and from the Clouds of the Imagination, by the Study of Philosophy, which he term'd *The Meditation of Death.*

Death. It seems to have had more Purity and Piety than the other Systems, but less Exactness. For it contain'd only single Maxims without Order or Dependance; and these Maxims were but a bare Explication of divine Worship, of Piety to Parents and Friends, of natural Honesty, of Modesty, Integrity, publick Spiritedness, and other common Offices of Life. And with the Precepts of this sound Doctrine, he inform'd the Minds of the People. *St. Jerom* observes that the whole Scheme of *Pythagoras's* Morals is contain'd in his *Golden Verses*, which yet are not so properly to be ascrib'd to him, as to his Disciples. *Hierocles*, Governour of *Alexandria* under *Diocletian*, has written a Comment on this Poem.

Cap. I: *Longinus* mentions but two Words of *Pythagoras*, which alone gives us a noble Idea of his moral Doctrine: When being ask'd what Accomplishments advanc'd us nearest to the Divine Nature, he answer'd *Beneficence* and *Veracity*. And

Magn. Mor. c. 1. though *Aristotle* assures us, that this Philosopher's Discourses did not proceed so much upon the Subject of Virtue, as those of *Socrates*; yet *Cicero* has confess'd, that there appear'd in the Followers of *Pythagoras* a peculiar Character of Wisdom, which so distinguish'd them from all other Sects, that at *Rome* in the Time of the first Consuls, a wise Man and a *Pythagorean* were esteem'd equivalent Terms: And what *Apuleius* reports of the Sobriety of these Professors, might *Athenæus* very justly claim the Admiration of ancient
L. 4. c. 16. Times.

Ut qui sapiens haberetur is continuo Pythagoreus putaretur. Cic. Tusc. Qu. Athenæus

II.

Socrates primus philosophiæ moralis autor fuit. Cic. Qu. Acad.

Socrates improv'd this Morality which *Pythagoras* had brought out of *Egypt*, with the Addition of settled Principles, and with some Sort of regular Method, by the Definitions and Divisions of the several Virtues. Other Philosophers, his

his Predecessors, had been confin'd to the Study of external Nature ; but *Socrates* studied Himself, endeavouring rather to cultivate his Heart than his Reason, and to frame his Manners than to refine his Wit. He had the Happiness of a most admirable Disposition to Vertue. For together with a deep and vast Capacity, he had such a Modesty and Simplicity, as render'd him amiable to all the World. That peculiar Spirit which *Apuleius* term'd *The God of Socrates*, has much exercis'd the Enquiries of the Learned, as having a great Influence on the Morals of this Philosopher. *Plato* would persuade us, That it was an invisible Angel, or Genius, that was his constant Guide and Director. *Tertullian* and *Lactantius* affirm it to have been an evil Dæmon. *Plutarch* says, 'Twas no more than a Way of Sneezing to the Right, or Left, which serv'd him for an auspicious, or inauspicious Omen, in all that he undertook. *Maximus Tyrius* thinks it was a secret Instinct of Conscience, which carried him towards Good, and diverted him from Evil. *Pomponatius* pretends that 'twas nothing else but a lucky Planet, that had the Ascendant at his Nativity. And *Montagne* will have it to have been a Sort of Enthusiasm, or sudden and violent Impulse of his Will, which serv'd him by Way of Foresight in Surprizes, of Admonition in Doubts, and of Defence in Dangers. But without so nice a Scrutiny of this Secret, it seems probable that *Socrates's* Genius, which conducted him in all his Actions, was really no more than his habitual Prudence, which he had gain'd by his Experience of Things, and his Reflections upon their Events, in which he was

*A Socrate
omnis quæ
est de vitâ
& moribus
philoso-
phia ma-
navit. I-
dem Qu.
Tusc.
Divinum
quoddam,
quod So-
crates
Dæmoni-
um appel-
lat, cui
semper ip-
se parue-
rit, nun-
quam im-
pellenti
sæpe revo-
canti.
Cic. de
Divin.
Tertull.
in Apol.
Lactant. l.
II. c. 24.
Plutarch
de Socrate.
In rebus
incertis
prospector,
in dubiis
præmoni-
tor, in pe-
riculosis
viator.
Apul. de
Deo So-
crat.
Eff. l. I.
c. 11.*

*Quæ res Homerum impulit, ut principibus heroum, Ulyssi, Agamem-
noni, Achilli, certos deos periculorum comites adjungeret. Cic. de Nat.
Dæor.*

*Socrates
Xenophonti
consulenti
sequeretur
ne Cy-
rum; no-
strum
consilium,
inquit,
humanum
est: de re-
bus incer-
tis ad A-
pollinem
censeo
referen-
dum?
Cic. de
Divin.*

*Dulcis, fa-
ceris, festi-
vi sermo-
nis atque*

seldom mistaken. So that the World believ'd of him what *Homer* would make us believe of his Heroes and Great Men, in his Poem, to each of whom he assigns a Deity for their Guide and Guardian, to lead them safe thro' the difficult Adventures to which their Virtue was expos'd. In a word, *Socrates's* Morality was his Dæmon, and he had no other secret Art but that of Prudence and Discretion. He suffer'd Death upon the most unjust Charge of Impiety, while his Piety (as *Plutarch* observes) was indeed his Crime: For that which made him suspected of Irreligion, was his Design of still Reforming and Purging *Pythagoras's* Philosophy, by retrenching those Fables and Superstitions which had crept into it, and had made it so ridiculous to his own Scholars; that, by this Means he might render it at length a just and rational System. Indeed, *Socrates* had such a profound and awful Regard to religious Worship, that when *Xenophon* came to ask his Advice about embarking in the Expedition with *Cyrus*, his Answer was to this Effect, "Human Counsels are uncertain; you ought to apply your self to the Divine." To be brief, the Doctrine of *Socrates* was one continued Lesson of Virtue, of which the other Philosophers scarce ever spoke a Word, except out of Policy or Ostentation. That Air of Railery which he put on, was only a Stratagem to procure Attention. His Morals, which in their native Rigour might have deterr'd Men from embracing them, gain'd Admittance by a seeming Easiness and Agreeableness; and this Mixture of Pleasantry with which he season'd the Driness of his Maxims, secur'd them a more favourable Entertainment with the Publick. Besides, he avoided by this means, that arrogant

in omni oratione, simulator Socrates. Cic. de Off. 1.

and magisterial Stile, then in Use among the Sophists, which he look'd on as an odious Yolk and Bondage of Reason. He establish'd it as a Rule of Discourse, to treat of the most serious Subjects without an Air of too much Seriousness, knowing that to please was the surest Method to persuade.

III.

Plato still improv'd upon the Draught of Morality which *Socrates* had left him ; for, by mixing his Ideas as the universal Principle of Philosophy through the whole Design, he carried each Virtue to its last Heighth and Accomplishment. In his *Phædon*, he explains the Nature of Moral Virtue, the great end of which is to clear the Understanding from the Falshood and Obscurity of the Imagination, by the Help of philosophical Reflection. After all, the greatest Part of his Dialogues are but so many fine Speeches without Principles ; yet such as do not fail to attain their End, and to instruct after their Manner : For the Morality of this Philosopher abounds with good Lessons, tending either to the authorizing of Virtue, or the discrediting of Vice ; and this Morality is diffus'd through his Writings, which yet has nothing in it of a very peculiar Character. It has been pretended, that *Apuleius's Metamorphosis of the Golden Ass*, is but an allegorical Explication of *Plato's* Morals, the Design of which is to shew, the use of Philosophy in purifying the Mind, and curing it of those Passions and gross Perceptions, which debase a Man to the Likeness of Brutes. For my part, I cannot come into this Judgment, the Notions of *Apuleius* being so libertine and impure. There reign'd at *Athens* in *Plato's* time, a false Taste and Character, introduc'd by the Sophists, which tended alike to the Cor-

*Cynico-
rum natio
inimica
verecun-
dia. Cic.
Off. 1.*

*Platonis
oratio in
virtute
laudanda
& in ho-
minibus
ad virtu-
tis studium
cohortan-
dis consu-
mebatur.
Cic. Qu.
Acad. 1.
Plato de
aeternitate
animorum,
non solum
idem sensit
ac Pytha-
goras, sed*

mortem

ruption of Morality and of Reason. If *Protagoras* was a Sophist in his Discourse, *Diogenes* was no less so in his Manners; for these were utterly false; his Probity was no better than Pride, and he was never modest, but out of Vain-glory. He commenc'd severe upon a Pique against *Plato*, whose Easiness and Gentility he design'd to expose by an Affectation of Rigour. The Edge of his Philosophy was commonly turn'd against Vertue or Greatness. He despis'd the King of *Persia* for being too rich, and pronounced *Alexander* unhappy, in being too powerful: Merit and good Fortune always put him into an ill Humour. *Diogenes's* Morals, therefore, could not but be very extravagant, as being built upon no other Foundation, than a vain Haughtiness and Moroseness of Temper: He was a grand Comedian, and had much more of the Bully than of the Philosopher. So that 'twas an easy Task for *Plato*, by the Solidity of his Doctrine, and Strictness of his Vertue, to destroy these false Morals of the *Cynicks*, who were the Disciples of *Antisthenes*, and profess'd Enemies to Modesty and Civility. It was *Plato*, likewise, that first rectified the Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul, which *Socrates* had learnt from *Pythagoras*, *Pythagoras* from the *Egyptians*, and the *Egyptians* from the *Hebrews*, by the Travels and Converse of *Abraham*. This he establish'd as the most important Principle of Pagan Morality, obliging Men to the Practice of Virtue, by the Hopes and Fears of future Rewards and Punishments. *Plato's* Doctrine had a near Alliance with that of the *Stoicks*, as ap-

& orationem attulit. Cic. Tusc. Qu. 1.

Plato multa dicit de immortalitate animorum, & reliqua post mortem tranquillitate bonorum penis impiorum. Cic. de Leg. 2.

appears from the History of *Antiochus*, of *Ascalon*, who join'd himself to the *Stoa*, after having been educated in the *Academy*. *Cicero* gives us the Reason of this, when he observes, that the most excellent of *Zeno's* Precepts were all borrow'd from *Socrates's* Fund.

IV.

Tho' the Morals of *Aristotle* have the same Foundation, the same Principles, the same Oeconomy with those of *Plato*; and tho', as *Tully* remarks, there's no essential Difference between the one and the other; yet it must be confess'd, that *Aristotle* form'd this whole Doctrine into a more regular Body; not only by distinguishing the Characters of publick and private Vertue, the Prudence of a Civil Government, and that of the Master of a Family; but likewise by establishing in his Books to *Nicomachus*, the two things which make the very Life and Soul of Morality, a last End or Happiness, and the Means of attaining it. In the first Book, he proves, that there is such an ultimate Happiness which Man is capable of enjoying. In the next eight which follow, he shews the Way how to arrive at this Happiness. And in the tenth and last, he declares that this Happiness consists in the most noble Action of human Nature, as conversant about the most excellent Object. These are *Aristotle's* Morals; the most accurate, and compleat, and the best methodiz'd of all the heathen Systems. Every Thing is there dispos'd in so artful a Manner, and the several Parts are so nicely connected with each other, and have all so direct a Tendency to the main End, that this must be acknowledg'd for one of the most accomplish'd Pieces of Antiquity. For it turns altogether on that admirable Method of *Analysis*, so familiar to this great Author, who by that

Art reduces the End to the Means, in the same manner as we refer the Parts to the whole, or the Effects to the Cause. And tho' in his third Book of Ethicks, he declares, that 'tis impossible to observe an exact Method on this Subject, by reason of common Infirmary and Instability, and the changeable Nature of human Actions; yet he is still regular to Admiration. But nothing has so much advanced the Glory of *Aristotle's* Morals, as the general Polity of the World; there being scarce any well-regulated Government but what is founded upon this Bottom. For which reason it was studiously declin'd by *Machiavel*, as too good and virtuous to enter into his Schemes, who advanc'd no other Arts of Empire but those of Falshood and Villany. But, after all, this moral Doctrine, as well as that of *Socrates* and *Plato*, is only capable of making a Philosopher, and has not Strength enough to make an honest Man: It may teach a Man to know his Duty, but it cannot engage him to love and embrace it. 'Tis not from these boasted Maxims, that a Man can derive true Courage and Patience to support him under Affliction: And he that owes all his Virtue to his Philosophy, is virtuous only upon Force.

V.

The great Principle of Morality advanc'd by *Zeno*, the Chief of the *Stoicks*, was to live conformably to Nature; founded upon a pretended Maxim of *Plato's* School, "that we ought to look for the sovereign Good in Nature only." But as this Maxim too much favour'd and indulg'd Sensuality, and likewise fell in with the impudent Doctrines of *Antisthenes* and the *Cynicks*, it scandaliz'd many Philosophers, and gave them a Prejudice against *Zeno*, and his Notions.

And

Nulla in
re, nisi in
natura
quaeren-
dum sum-
mum bo-
num.
Cic. Qu.
Acad. I.

And therefore, that he might repair his Credit with the Publick, he gave a more honest Turn to his Opinion, in explaining this Conformity to Nature, by an Agreeableness to right Reason. This Explication of their Master was again differently interpreted by his Scholars. *Cleanthes* maintain'd, it was to live according to the Guidance of that divine Ray which Heaven had darted into every Man's Soul. *Chrysippus* affirm'd, that 'twas to act according to the Light and Direction of Virtue and Reason; but both the one and the other grounded their Expositions upon *Zeno's* Principle, that Virtue and Reason are confin'd within as strait Limits as Truth; and that, as whatever is contrary to Truth is equally false, so whatever is contrary to Reason and Virtue is equally unreasonable and vitious. All turn'd upon this Rule with *Zeno's* Followers. But the World agreed in rejecting the Consequences of so extravagant an Opinion. Nothing was thought more ridiculous than their Parity of Sins, and nothing more false than that Tranquillity which they grounded upon an Indifference to external Good and Evil. These Paradoxes may, at first Sight, raise our Admiration, but can only move our Laughter upon a closer View. That Kingdom of the wise Man which *Zeno* so much applauds, and which made every Philosopher of his Sect a Master and Governour of a World, was but a species of Phrensy; and that Calmness of Spirit which he affected by a seeming Insensibility of outward Things, was no better than a visionary Dream. For may we not discover a real Perturbation under this appearing Serenity? And are not all the Arguments of *Seneca* in his Books of *Tranquil-*

*In exple-
tione na-
turae sum-
mum bo-
num con-
sistere.*
*Cic. de
Fin. 5.
Idem beatè
vivere, &
secundum
naturam
vivere. Id.
Epist.*

*Stoicis
placet,
omnia pec-
cata esse
paria.*
*Cic. Qu.
Acad. 4.
Illa para-
doxa pri-
mâ specie
admiratio-
nem, re-
explicatâ
risum mo-
vent. ibid.*

*Nimis al-
ta promit-*

*tiis, nimis dura præcipitis: nos homunciones sumus, negare omnia no-
bis non possumus. Sen. Ep. 11. 6.*

Vereor ne
ille plura
tribuat
virtuti,
quam
natura
patiatur.
Cic. Qu.
Acad. 4.

Stoici eam
sapienti-
am inter-
pretantur,
quam ad-
huc nemo
mortalis
est conse-
cutus.
Cic. in
Lel.

Rubelli-
um Plau-
tum as-
sumpsisse
arroganti-
am Stoico-
rum, quæ
schola
turbidos
et nego-
tiorum
appetentes
facit.
An. XIV.

Stoici ex omnibus Philosophis accommo datissimè scripserunt ad
veritatem Christianam. Lips. 1. Ep. 97.

lity and *Constancy*, empty and frivolous? There is nothing of *Sincerity*, nothing of *Nature* in all this. The whole *Stoical* Virtue was the Offspring of mere *Vanity*. That external Grimace of *Wisdom* profess'd in the *Porch*, was a most false and deceitful Picture of the Soul: Men were made *Philosophers* only by Way of *Machine*: All that was preach'd and taught was a certain Loftiness of Sentiments, very wild and unsociable, and no Way proportion'd to the Infirmities of Mankind. Those fine Speeches of *Constancy*, *Moderation*, *Equanimity*, *Intrepidity* and *Greatness* of Soul, among these false Pretenders to *Wisdom*, were but so many big Words, invented to cover and disguise their *Pride*. It was not a true Honour, but a haughty and assuming Stateliness that reign'd in their Conduct. The *Stoick*, as drawn at full Length by *Seneca* and *Epietetus*, is but an imaginary wise Man, and such as the World never saw: And *Plutarch* in one of his Tracts against *Zeno*, proves the Morals of this Philosopher to have been more romantick, than all the ancient Tales. In *Tiberius's* Reign, Men affected the Character of *Stoicks*, as some Sort of Shelter under their Misfortunes; and this amounted to no more than the taking up of some odd Maxims, strain'd to a Pitch beyond Reason and Humanity, which taught them to compose their Countenance, and to die with a better Grace. *Tacitus* reports of one Senator, in particular, that he assum'd the Habit of this Sect, as the most suitable to his turbulent and intriguing Spirit: And we find by the Ancients, that a *Stoick* unmask'd, made but a very contemptible Figure. In which regard *Lipsius* seems to be greatly mistaken,

when

when he bestows so large Encomiums on this moral System, and pretends, that 'tis of all the most agreeable to our Religion. For my part, nothing seems to me more disagreeable; because it tends only to the nourishing up of a Spirit of Pride and Independance; for if a *Stoick* be humble in his Words, 'tis for no other End but that he may be haughty in his Conduct. This Morality may seem indeed, more brilliant than others, as being compos'd of specious Maxims, and assuming Expressions; but the Virtue it professes is a mere Shadow, and every Thing is vain in a *Stoick*, to his very Modesty.

*Stoici re-
bus acuti,
oratione
magnifici.*
Quint. XI

VI.

There is nothing that has a fairer Shew of Honesty than the moral Doctrine of *Epicurus*. It proposes no other End, but the purest Pleasures of the Mind, and professes only to lead Men into a State of perfect Liberty, by curing their Weaknesses, and restraining their Passions, and investing them with the true Character of Wisdom. *Epicurus* himself was a Person of great Capacity, and a very good Manager; who took a large Round, the better to come at his Point, and to save Appearances. He knew that the soft, voluptuous, and temporizing Doctrine of *Aristippus* had been censur'd by *Plato* and *Xenophon*, and by all those who express'd any Concern for Discipline and Probity. And therefore he was obliged to be more severe, as the only Way to gain a favourable Hearing; and he so artfully conceal'd his real Sentiments under a frugal Life, and a prudent Behaviour, that *Tully*, who blames him on many other Accounts, could not but commend him on this.

*Omnis
Aristip-
pum de-
cuit color.*
Hor.

*Xenophon
contra
Voluptat.
Plato de
Anim.*

*Epicuro
homini du-
ro & as-
pero, non
est satis.*
&c. Cic.

Gassen- Tusc. 3.

*Video ab
Epicuro
multa se-
verè dici,
multa
præclarè.*

*Qu. Tuf. i
Epicureo-
rum philo-
sophia sus-
cipit pa-
trrocinium
Voluptatis.
Cic. de
Fin. 2.*

*Identidem
dicitis nos
non intel-
ligere
quam vo-
luptatem
dicatis.
ibid.*

*Solent isti
negare nos
intelligere
quam vo-
luptatem
dicat Epi-
curus.
ibid.*

*Dulces vo-
luptates
Epicurus
interdum
sic extenu-
at, ut
Curium
loqui pu-
tes; inter-
dum lau-
dat ut
quid præ-*

terea sit bonum neget se posse suspicari. Cic. de Fin. 2.

*Epicureos quædam apud se arcana habuisse, neque se permittere omnibus.
Ex. Clem. Alex. Strom. 5.*

Gassendus has made a large Apology for the Opinion of this Philosopher, and pretends, that the Pleasure in which he fix'd the sovereign Good, was nothing else but the highest Tranquillity of Mind, in Conjunction with the most perfect Health of Body. But *Tully*, *Horace* and *Plutarch*, as well as almost all the Fathers of the Church, give us a very different Representation. Indeed the Nature of this Pleasure, in which the chief happiness is suppos'd to be seated, is a grand Problem in *Epicurus's* Morals. And *Cicero* informs us, that his Scholars were wont to complain of their being generally misunderstood, when they deliver'd themselves upon that Subject. Thus were learned Men divided in the Judgment they pass'd on this Doctrine, which according to *Epicurus's* different Ways of explaining it, had two Faces, the one fair and agreeable, the other rough and severe. For sometimes he speaks like a Philosopher, and very gravely declaims against the Pleasures of Sense: At other times his Rigors are all softn'd, and he appears a very discreet Advocate for Debauchery. We must allow him to have been a great Politician in his Pleasures, and one that resolv'd to caress the Men of Liberty, without disobliging the Men of Sobriety and Strictness. He had some peculiar Secrets in his School, which he took Care not to divulge to all the World. In publick, his Discourses still ran upon the Pleasures of the Mind: But he knew how to change his Language, among his Confidants, and at easier Hours. And thus, we have the whole Mystery of this celebrated Doctrine: It was

innocent in Expression, but criminal in Thought: It had a beautiful Outside, but was all Corruption within: It was honest in Word, and impudent in Fact. These loose Philosophers took up a seeming Austerity, to disguise their secret Indulgence to themselves; and all their Scheme of Morality, was but a Veil for their immoral Behaviour. For they lived ill, tho' they spake well: And to secure the Freedom of their own Conduct, they were so discreet as never to censure that of others. So nice an Art as this could not but represent them under very different Colours to the View of Antiquity; so as to gain them the opposite Characters, sometimes of honest Men, and sometimes of extravagant Libertines. But those who have undertaken to vindicate *Epicurus* are out-voted by so vast a Majority, as should make them ashamed of their Cause. For contrary to say nothing of the ancient *Stoicks*, who inveigh'd so plentifully against him, there is no Doctrine so universally condemn'd by the first *Christian* Writers as his. We may allow, that *Epicurus* had great Virtues, and that his Followers were rational, faithful, commodious and friendly; as also that he himself was particularly sober. Yet this Sobriety was at the Bottom, but a Regimen of Health, in which the Weakness of his Constitution oblig'd him to be so exact, that the best Hours of his Life were spent in attending his Digestion. Besides, he had a very artificial Modesty, and that he might seem to have divested himself, of all the philosophical Arrogance and Presumption, he would often maintain the Cause of Ignorance against Knowledge. But in the most rigorous of his moral Precepts, there appear'd some Strokes of Humanity and Indulgence, which did not fail to lay open the Bottom of his Heart. After all, what-

Summum bonum negat Epicurus sine voluptatibus sum moribus suscipiari. Cic. Qu. Acad. Voluptuarii diverticula quaerunt; virtutem habent in ore totos dies. Cic. de Fin. 4. Origen. Contra Cels. Lactant. Hieron. Contra Eunom. Theod. Sc. Epicurei viri optimi; nullum genus est minus malitiosum. Cic. de Fin. 2. Epicurus comis in tuendis amicitiiis. Cic. de N. Deor. 1.

ever

*Epicurum
Deos ver-
bo posuisse
revera sus-
tulisse.*

*Cic. de N.
Deor. 3.*

ever plausible Colours may be laid on this Doctrine, from the Consideration of that Pleasure, which Reason and Vertue will allow in the most abstracted Spirits; yet no Man who has any Spark of common Honesty can bear its Insolence, in Presuming to oppose Religion. And without going far into this Charge, what *Aristodemus* in *Plutarch* discourses of *Epicurus*'s Injustice in attempting to banish Providence out of the World; the Speech of *Theon* in the same Piece, asserting the Preference of corporeal to intellectual Delights; together with what *Diogenes Laertius* reports of *Epicurus*'s Gallantries, his Mistresses, the Refinement of his Pleasures, and the Lewdness of his Opinions, are sufficient to render this Hypothesis suspected by any true Philosopher. *Plutarch* had Reason to affirm that *Epicurus*, in taking away Religion, deprived Men of a greater Pleasure than all those which he left them to possess. And therefore we cannot be guilty of Uncharitableness in supposing this wise Master to have been none of the best Livers.

VII.

The Noise that was made at *Athens*, by the Morals of *Zeno* and *Epicurus*, then chiefly in Vogue, gave Men an Emulation of cultivating this Part of Philosophy, in Preference to all others: And this Study grew to be so much the Mode, that the Enquiries of Nature were given over, and the World was so hotly engag'd in the Search of the supreme Good, as to neglect all other Pursuits. But here, as every one reason'd by his own Principles, so every one establish'd an Happiness agreeable to his own Humour. *Herillus*, who was of a studious Disposition, plac'd the chief Felicity in Science. *Calippon* and *Dinomachus*, would have it consist in honest

*Herillus
sensit nihil
esse sum-
mum bo-
num præ-
ter Scien-
tiam.*

Cic. de Fin. 5.

honest and lawful Pleasure. *Theophrastus*, who lov'd an easie and commodious Life, believ'd that Virtue could not make a Man happy, without the Concurrence of Fortune. Some added Health as a necessary Ingredient; others Beauty, Indolence, and a good Constitution. Some affirm this sovereign Happiness to be compos'd of Honour, Credit, Authority and those other Advantages, that any way contribute to the Satisfaction of Body or Mind. By this Eagerness and Application that Men express'd in drawing out a Plan of Felicity, in which each establish'd his favourite Interest, superior to all others; Notions so multiplied upon the Point, according to the Variety of Spirits and Inclinations, that *Varro* reckon'd up no less than two hundred eighty eight different Opinions, concerning the *Summum Bonum*, as *St. Austin* assures us in his Book *de Civitate Dei*: Every one running after his own Fancy, and setting up that for the Object of his Happiness, which was most attractive of his Desire. But the Understanding of Man is so weak in all its Reasonings about the supreme Good, by its own unassisted Powers, as never to reach but a short and imperfect Idea: It is not able to come up with Truth, and therefore idly follows its Shadow. Indeed that Phantom of Decency and Glory, which was the sole Aim of Pagan Morals, as vain and frivolous as it was, yet serv'd to excite some Men to Virtue; as the most solid Foundation that the Reason of Mankind discover'd by mere natural Light. It was upon this Principle, that *Panætius* in his moral Instructions, so well display'd the most substantial Duties of human Conduct. For after *Zeno* and *Epicurus* we have no Remains of any new Draught of Morality. The Characters of *Theophrastus*, the Comedies of *Menander*, *Plautus* de *Fin.* §.

Voluptas adjuncta honestati Callipponi & Dino-macho placuit, vanitas doloris Diodore. Ibid. Theophrasti liber de vitâ beatâ, in quo multum fortunæ datur. Ibid. Menedemus putat omne bonum in mente possum quæ cernitur veritas. Cic. Qu. Acad. 4. L. 19. c. 1. Excitantur gloria adumbrata opinione quæ formam habet honestatis & similitudinem. Cic. tus de Fin. §.

tus and *Terence*, are very good Lessons of Manners, but without any Principles. But of all the Heathen Systems, the most accurate is that of *Tully's Offices*, the Rules of which are founded upon the severest Virtue. *Seneca's* Morals are not so pure, and so exact: For tho' he advances some of the finest Maxims in the World, yet he does not always support them with an equal Spirit. *Plutarch* is more real, and more in Earnest: He teaches Virtue with the greatest Simplicity imaginable, by the just Recital, and Commendation of virtuous Actions. *Pliny*, tho' a profess'd Libertine, yet in his Prefaces to his Book of natural History, has some very bright and forcible Strokes of Morality. He always speaks like a masterly Genius, and with a Nobleness of Expression, that is familiar to him. He really aims at the Reformation of Manners, when he inveighs with so much Heat against the Luxury, Debauchery, and other Corruptions of the Times. He is always well designing, and shews an equal Sincerity in his Censure and his Praise. *Epictetus* is the most rational of all the *Stoicks*, as being the least transported, and shewing the greatest Integrity of Heart. The other Philosophers that compos'd Treatises of Morals, either built them upon the Principles of *Aristotle*, as *Panatius*, *Cicero* and *Plutarch*; or writ them to no Purpose.

Uni animantium homini luxuria, uni ambitio, uni avaritia, nulli vita fragilior, nulli rerum omnium libido major, nulli pavor, nulli rabies acrior. Plin. Proem. l. 7.

VIII.

But nothing so obscur'd the Glory, and broke the Measures of Heathen Morals, as the

Scio quibus viribus opus sit, ut persuadeatur superbis quanta virtus sit humilitatis. Aug. de Civ. Dei l. 1. c. 1.

Lives

Lives of the first *Christians*. The Doctrine preach'd by the Apostles, and their Successors, which alone could teach Men to be humble under Greatness, and modest under good Success, together with all that strictness of Probity, profess'd and practis'd in the Church, appear'd so admirable in the Eyes of the Pagan Instructors, that by striving to imitate and rival the *Christian* Vertue, they fell into the utmost Extravagance; going so far out of their Character, and beyond the Limits of that secular Wisdom, whose Maxims they had avow'd. All their Vertue degenerated into Ostentation; all their Wisdom spent it self in empty Boasts and ungrounded Pretensions: And as Cowardice sometimes makes a Man bold, so Vanity sometimes made an Heathen vertuous. The Life of *Apollonius*, so fraught with Prodigies, was written by *Philostratus*, with no other Intention, but to oppose it to the Life and Miracles of our Saviour: As the Lives of the *Sophists* by *Eunapius*, who flourish'd under *Theodosius* the Great, were design'd to vie with those of the first Believers, and by that Means to overthrow the Doctrines of the Gospel. *Vopiscus* attempted somewhat of the like kind, in imitation of *Eunapius*. And long before them, *Epiſtetus*, who by his Converse with the *Christians*, had abated very much of the Pride of *Zeno's* School, began that Spirit of Emulation, which reviv'd the moral Doctrine of the *Stoicks*, under the Reigns of the *Antonini*; for then most of the Philosophers joyn'd themselves to this Tribe, as *Sextus Empiricus* informs us: And the Reason of their Choice was, that they might counterfeit the *Christian* Severity, by the unnatural and strain'd Gravity of the Porch, fit only

*Plures fu-
isse tum
qui Stoi-
corum Se-
ctam se-
darentur,
quàm qui aliam quancunque.*

*Qui se pro-
fixebantur
orbis ma-
gistros fa-
ci sunt
discipuli
humilita-
tis Chri-
stiana.*

Baron. ad
Ann. 234.

to swell Men with Pride and Conceit. All other Moral Systems easily betray'd their Imperfection, when compar'd with the *Christian*; which at length prevail'd to the utter Exclusion of the rest, by the irresistible Evidence of a truly modest, sincere, and disinterested Honesty. For no Institution but that of Faith ever taught a Man to appear what he is, and to be what he appears. A *Christian*, who glories in his Infirmary, has nothing that he can be ashamed of, or that he desires to conceal. He alone is the truly magnanimous Person; because he has always Courage enough to be open, and never Weakness enough to wear a Disguize. The whole Frame of Heathen Morals was shaken and confounded by some of the first Words of our Blessed Saviour that he spoke in Publick, when in his Divine Sermon on the Mount He pronounc'd a Blessing on the *Meek*, and the *Poor in Spirit*. For the Sum of Pagan Doctrine is Pride, as the Sum of *Christian* is Humility: The one teaches a Man to be vain and insolent, the other obliges him to be sober-minded. And, since Purity of Manners and Sincerity of Intention are wholly of *Christian* Growth, it may be affirm'd that Honesty is confin'd within the Pale of the Church. For every good Resolution, how high and noble soever, if impugn'd by an Interest more powerful than the Motive of Virtue upon which it proceeds, must necessarily yield to the Assault. It is our Religion alone, that by proposing the Interests of Eternity, superiour beyond Comparison to all others, can render its Principles immovable, and its Precepts irresistible. And thus, without *Christianity*, there can be no such thing as true Morality, because there can be no true Virtue: And all other Probity, besides that of *Christians*, is, ordinarily speaking, no better than politick Management, and an Art of Address.

IX.

Indeed, the Pagan Morals appear'd to be themselves so weak, instead of proving a Support to human Weakness, that they soon fell into utter Contempt, with all such as were seriously dispos'd to the study of Vertue and a good Life. For besides that the Indifference to Pleasure and Pain, Glory and Infamy, Wealth and Poverty, that *Zeno* pretended to teach, was never really found but under the Discipline of Faith; besides that the Contentment and Felicity under Sufferings, which the Heathen Sages so much boasted, was never made good but by *Christian* Examples; the Sum of philosophical Vertue prov'd upon a strict Enquiry, to be nothing else but an Art of concealing Mens Vice, and of flattering their Pride; because the utmost it could perform, was to fill the Mind with false Ideas of Constancy and Resolution; while the *Christian* Profession brought them acquainted with their real Infirmities, and taught them to restrain those irregular Desires, which the former Institutions allow'd them to indulge and enjoy. It was the Direction of these Lights, and the Information of these admirable Truths, that establish'd the new Gospel Morals, and made so entire a Change in the Rules of Prudence, and in the Face of the World. For when once this Heavenly Doctrine of the Law of Grace, replenish'd with all the Treasures of Divine Wisdom, had truly instructed Men in what they ought to love, and what to hate, Humility and Poverty were judg'd preferable to Wealth and Grandour, and *Christians* admitted no other Measure of their Esteem and Inclination, but that Eternity which God had promis'd them for their Reward. This was the moral Doctrine that the Apostles preach'd, that the Martyrs sign'd with

Veteres philosophi in beatorum insulis fingunt qualis sit vita sapientum, qui in naturæ cognitione non solum beatæ vitæ oblectationem, sed etiam levamentum miseriarum. Cic. de Fin. 3^o

their Blood, that the holy Virgins adorn'd with the Purity and Chastity of their Lives, that the publick Laws inforc'd, and that at length gain'd a full Establishment in the World, by the invincible Powers of Integrity and Truth. Among the Fathers, who have been the most eminent Expositors of this divine Morality, *St. Basil*, *St. Chrysostom*, *St. Jerom*, *St. Ambrose*, *St. Austin*, *St. Gregory*, *St. Bernard* and *Thomas Aquinas*, are especially distinguish'd. *St. Basil* has handled it as a Confessor and Casuist, in his ascetick Discourses; *St. Chrysostom* as a Preacher in his Sermons, and in his Remarks upon *St. Paul's* Epistles, in which he has left us one of the most perfect Ideas of practical Christianity, and an admirable Model for the Pulpit, worthy to be studied by all of the sacred Profession. *St. Jerom*, *St. Ambrose* and *St. Austin* have explain'd it, in the Quality of Interpreters of Scripture, and Doctors of the Church; *St. Gregory* in his Allegories, as a Philosopher; *St. Bernard* as a Writer in the contemplative Way, and *Thomas Aquinas* as a Divine. The *Secunda Secunda* of the last of these great Men, is the most rational, the justest, and the best manag'd System, that ever was compos'd. In it we have all *Aristotle's* Ethicks reduc'd to the most exact and accomplish'd Method. *Javellus*, a Professor of the same Order with *Aquinas*, has, next to him, written best on this Part of Philosophy. *Petrarch's* Discourses of the various Accidents of Life, have some Appearance of a moral Treatise: But as these are no more than so many curious Reflections upon Fortune, they are of very small Use when applied to Conduct: They discover a great Fertility of Invention, but as great a Barrenness of Reason and Argument. There is a nobler Spirit in *Bacon's* moral Essays,

than

than in any other of his Works: Every Thing there is finely thought; but I know not whether every Thing be truly asserted. *Cardan's* Subtilty was never more at a Loss than about the Manners: He has advanc'd nothing upon this Subject, but wild and roving Ideas, no way fit for the Government of Life; and that Knowledge of the World, which he promises to teach, is calculated for Ostentation, not for Practice. *Descartes* has only touch'd upon a moral Principle or two, in his Method: the Study of Nature being his favourite Care. I forbear to speak of a Number of other Authors, who have appear'd with Success in this Field; especially the *Italians* and *Spaniards*, who are inclin'd to moral Reflections beyond most Men; as is evident from the great and just Reputation of their casuistick Writers.

X.

Yet in these last Times we have been presented with some Schemes of Morals, of which the Lessons were admirable, but the Principles detestable. Men have suffer'd themselves to be misguided by these fair Appearances, only because they would not examine them to the Bottom, but blindly ran after the Lessons without regarding the Principles. The best and purest Morality can never be true, unless it be founded on a sound and orthodox Belief; and none is so founded, but the moral Doctrine of the Catholick Church of *Christ*, which howsoever opposite to the Propensions of Sense, has so well preserv'd its first Vigour, as to remit nothing of the Severity of its Precepts, in a Course of so many hundred Years. And this faithful and uniform Perseverance, amidst the perpetual Vicissitude of human Things, is one of the most evident Demonstrations of its Truth and Certainty. But it is greatly to be lamented,

*Initium
sapientiae
timor Do-
mini.*

that this excellent Doctrine, which might be so ready an Aid, and so sure a Support to its Professors, under the most difficult Circumstances of Life, should be defeated, and rendred almost useless, by Mens Ignorance of its wholesome Instructions, and their Neglect of so Divine a Philosophy. This noble Preservative falls short of its Effect, through the Levity of our Minds which are busie in the Pursuit of human Consolations, and through that natural, but vitious Curiosity, which fills the Soul with barren Notions, but extinguishes its heavenly Flame. Happy is that *Christian*, who under a just and hearty Persuasion of the Truth of his Religion, knows no other Philosophy but the Fear of God, the Beginning of all true Wisdom ! But that we may, once for all, be satisfied as to the general Vanity of profane and secular Science ; let us consider, how cold and languid all the Succours of Pagan Morality must prove, to a Man that was Yesterday ador'd, and is to Day abandon'd by all the World ; and such Examples have not been wanting in the present Age. At the same Time let us reflect, what Assistance our Religion affords to a Person under Misfortune, and Distress ; how it redoubles his Faith, by the Sense of his Calamity ; assuring him that Affliction is a Blessing and Favour, and temporal Pain an Earnest of future and endless Joy. 'Tis in this that the sovereign Good or Happiness, so vainly sought after by the Heathen Sages, does really consist ; as being alone the Fruit of so pure and holy a Religion. But there is no greater Argument of human Weakness, than to know this supreme Good, and yet not to love and desire it ; not to have Courage enough to follow the Evidence of our own Reason ; always to be studying, and never to be convinc'd.

R. E.

REFLECTIONS

UPON

PHYSICKS.

I.

I Can easily conceive that Men should set up Principles of Logick and Ethicks, both of their own making; because our Reasonings and our Actions, about which these Disciplines are conversant, are properly the Work of Man: But I can by no means comprehend, how they should dare to advance their own Principles of Physicks, the Object of which is Nature, and Job Nature the Work of God. By what Sagacity shall we, who have not Skill enough to penetrate the Intention of the Creature, be able to trace out the Design of the Creator? Was it by our Understanding, that he stretch'd out the Heavens; by our Wisdom, that he laid the Foundations of the Earth? Or what Philosopher has yet sounded the Depths of that eternal Wisdom, which was before all Things, to declare its Counsels, or shew us its Secrets? St. Austin says, the World is a great Machine, shining in every Part with the Power and the Skill of Him that fram'd it. But may we not rather

*Ubi eras
quando
ponebam
fundamen-
ta terræ?
indica mi-
hi si habes
intelligen-
tiam.*

*Job
xxxviii.
Numquid
tu primus
homo, &
ante colles
formatus?*

*Job XV.
Sapien-
tiam
Dei præ-
cedentem
omnia quis
investi-
gavit?
Ecclus. i.
Confess. i.
10. c. 6.*

G g 4
nosti semitas nubium? Job XXXVII.

term *Numquid*

*Numquid
nosti ordi-
nem cæli?
numquid
ingressus
es profun-
da maris?
thesaurum
nivis &
grandinis
aspexisti,
per quam
viam spar-
gitur? quis
dedit im-
brem cur-
sum &
viam so-
nantis to-
nitruï, &c.
Job. 38.*

*Naturæ
arcana
non pro-
miscuè nec
omnibus
patent:
in interi-
ore sacra-
rio clausa
sunt, ex
quibus al-
tius hæc
ætas, aliud
quæ post
nos subit,
aspiciet.
Sen. Qu.
Nat.*

term it a great and mighty Labyrinth, of which the Philosophers in all Ages have unsuccessfully endeavour'd to find the Clue? 'Tis possible indeed, to attain the Knowledge of some natural Effects, by a diligent Examination of their immediate Causes; but are we quick-sighted enough, to unfold the Operations of the first Cause, the Maker of all Things, to discern the hidden Springs of his Art, or copy out the Model by which he perform'd his Work? If the smallest and most contemptible Things, which lie within the Sphere of our Sense, and which have been so long our daily Prospect and Study, do yet present us with somewhat that is incomprehensible; if the Herbs of the Field have their peculiar Qualities unknown to Man; shall we be so very extravagant, as to pretend an exact Acquaintance with the Powers and Properties of those vast Bodies which compose the System of the Universe, and a clear Perception of all the Wonders we admire? Let us not put a Cheat upon our selves: Nature has her Mysteries; and proceeds to her End by ways to us imperceptible. And after our strictest Enquiry, and Application to her Secrets, we really know so little of that which we embrace with the firmest Persuasion, that the study of natural Philosophy alone, might be sufficient to humble and mortifie human Pride. 'Tis an abstruse and profound Science, in which we scarce meet with one determin'd Point, or certain Conclusion. Those who have spoke the best upon it, have for the most part spoke without Reason. Let us not perplex our Thoughts, with the framing of new Theories and Systems. This Project has pass'd through

*Peccari ab Aristotele & ab aliis, cum in naturâ scrutantur quæ oc-
cultaverit ipsa natura, hoc est divina voluntas quæ est ipsa natura,
ut inquit Augustinus. Possev. Biblioth. l. 13. c. 20,*

so many Heads, that if any Thing could have been invented more excellent than our ordinary Schemes, we had long ago been bless'd with the Discovery. And after so many have pursu- *Est ani-*
 ed in vain, it is Part of common Wisdom to *morum in-*
 give over the Chase, and to content our selves *geniorum-*
 with admiring the Abyss of the Wisdom and *que natu-*
 Knowledge of God, under a deep Sense, and *rale quod-*
 hearty Acknowledgement of our own Blindness *dam quasi*
 and Ignorance. Nothing indeed can afford so *pabulum*
 large a Satisfaction to the Mind of Man, no- *considera-*
 thing can so much excite our Curiosity, or feed *tio natura.*
 and gratifie it, as the Consideration of Nature, *Cic. acad.*
 and the Survey of natural Appearances. Happy *Qu. 4.*
 the Man, that can arrive at any the least Degree *Felix qui*
 of Assurance in these belov'd Enquiries! But *potuit re-*
 Nature withdraws herself from our View; and *rum cog-*
 leaves only her outward Surface to exercise our *noscere*
 Speculations. The Knowledge we have of her *causas,*
 is slender and imperfect; and Providence seems *&c.*
 delighted in abandoning us to our Curiosity, as *Virg.*
 the Punishment of our Pride; while we feel our *Georg.*
 selves inflam'd with a Desire of knowing all
 Things, and yet find our selves reduc'd to the
 Misery of being ignorant of all Things, even of
 our selves.

II.

But as vain as this Science appears to be, by *In tantâ*
 reason of the Obscurity and Uncertainty of its *obscuri-*
 Object, it is no less so, by reason of the divi- *tate natu-*
 ded Opinions of those who have studied it with *ræ, dissen-*
 the greatest Applause. All the Power of anci- *sionibus*
 ent Philosophy was not able to settle any one *tantis*
 Principle of Nature. *Thales* maintain'd that the *summo-*
 Water was the great Source of all Things; *rum viro-*
Heraclitus declar'd for the Fire; *Anaximenes* for *rum qui*
de rebus
contrariis
tan to pere.
discrepant, assentior ei sententia nihil percipi posse. Cic. Qu. Acad. 4.
 the

Pythagorei the Air; *Pythagoras* for Numbers; *Democritus* for
ex numeris Atoms; *Museus* for Unity; *Parmenides* for Infi-
proficisci nity. And under this profound Darkness of na-
volunt o- tural Things, and this wide Distance of Con-
mnia. Ibid. jectures about them, it was impossible to be

Aliud ju- enfur'd of the least Particular. *Protagoras* af-
dicium Pro- firm'd that every Thing was really true which
tagore, qui appear'd to be so. *Aristippus* allow'd nothing to
putet id be true but what Men are thro'ly convinc'd of
verum esse by the inward Perswasion of the Mind. *Chry-*
quod cui- *sippus* declares, that the Senses are always in the
que verum wrong: *Lucretius* contends, that they are al-
videatur. ways in the right. *Picus Mirandula*, in his Ex-
ibid. mination of the pagan Doctrine, *Ludovicus Vi-*

Præterper- *moriones* *ves*, in his Piece of the Corruption of Arts,
intimas A- and *Possevinus* in the third Part of his *Bibliotheca*,
ristippus are very Eloquent upon this common Place, the
nihil putat Weakness and Uncertainty of Human Judg-
esse judi- ment. And it must indeed be confess'd, that
cii. ibid. there's nothing so certain in Nature, but what
 may be made the Subject of Dispute. The

Singula Consequence of this, is not that we should com-
improvi- mence Scepticks, and entertain a general Doubt
dum mor- and Distrust of all Things, but that we should
talitatem not too easily receive the Proposals of those
involvunt, Authors, who are every Day for building new
ut inter i- Worlds, and offering new Principles of Phy-
sta certum sicks; we ought to examine them before we em-
fit nihil brace them, should not suffer our selves to be sur-
esse certi, priz'd with their Novelty, before we are satis-
nec mise- fied of their Probability. We should admit no
rius quid. System, but upon those Conditions upon which
quam ho- *Ptolemy* publish'd his; that is, only as an Hypo-
mine, nec thesis, and without obtruding Authority instead
superbium. of Reason and Demonstration. Indeed, a Man
Plin. l. 2. will be extreemly ridiculous, if he do's not
c. 7. speak modestly upon a Subject to which he is
Ptolemaus almost
noluit suis
Hypothet-
sibus fidem
adhiberi.
Possev.

almost an absolute Stranger. *Lucretius*, however daring and presumptuous in pronouncing of natural Things, has yet happily confess'd, that he was unacquainted with their Originals. We may affirm therefore, in general, That the first Naturalists advanc'd their Principles only as Conjectures; for Nature is too stately to discover her self to any Beholder. The visible Effects of her Operations may indeed let us into some Notion of her invisible Powers. But what Eye is strong enough to pry into her secret Counsels, and to pierce thro' the thick Veil of her Designs? Let us therefore look upon the several Systems, only as so many probable Explications of what may happen in Nature, not as so many Laws to necessitate what must happen. Let us consider *Pythagoras's* Numbers, *Democritus's* Atoms, *Leucippus's* Plenum and Vacuum, *Plato's* Ideas, *Aristotle's* Matter and Form, *Descartes's* Vortices and Corpuscula, only as Notions offer'd to our Scrutiny, not as Rules impos'd upon our Understanding. Let us hear those with the most Favour, who give the most rational Account of all Things; because 'tis plain they have the Art of ranging their Imaginations in the best Order, and with the finest Chain. But let us not fancies them to have been so absurd, as to have given us Opinion for Science, and Probability for Truth. This is a very necessary Precaution, which we ought to take along with us, if we would tread securely in the doubtful and intricate Paths of Nature. For as a false Level will drive a whole Building awry, so a false Principle will render a whole Plan of Physicks irregular and defective.

Nam
quamvis
rerum ig-
norem pri-
mordia qua
sint. l. 2.
Quis ho-
minum
potest sci-
re consi-
lium Dei,
cognitare
quid velit?
Sapient. IX

*Nostra
Physica
tu nosti;
quæ conti-
nentur ex
effusione
Ex ma-
teriâ eâ
quam sin-
git & for-
mat effe-
ctio.*

*Cic. l. i.
Qu. Ac.*

*Laudemus
Deum qui
separavit
Aristote-
lem ab ali-
is in perfe-
ctione,
appropria-
vitque
ultimam
ei dignita-
tem huma-
nam, quam
nullus po-
test attinge-
re.*

*Ex Aver.
l. i. de
Gener.
Hieron.
Epist.
In Div.
Th. l. 2.
Eu. 109.
A. 1.*

But where shall we fix among all these Uncertainties; or by what Direction shall we steer in so difficult a Way? *Plutarch*, in the second Volume of his *Opuscula*, reports at large the different Opinions of the ancient Naturalists, as *Tully* had done before him in his Books of *Academick Questions*; and both the one and the other acquiesce in that of *Aristotle*, as, upon a nice Examination, preferable to all the rest. In which Judgment they are follow'd by *Galen*, and by all the greatest Genius's of succeeding Times. We have here a noble Appearance in *Aristotle's* behalf; and what can be alledg'd more for the Honour and Advantage of this great Philosopher, than the concurrent Testimony of so many famous Men, admir'd for the Solidity of their Judgment, and Exactness of their Censure. The same Opinion of *Aristotle's* Worth was afterwards entertain'd by all that apply'd themselves to contemplate the vast Capacity of his mighty Genius. *S. Jerom* confesses, that the Soul of this Philosopher was a Kind of Prodigy in Nature, and that he knew as much as 'tis possible for Man, by his own unassisted Strength to attain. *Medina*, a *Spanish* Divine, do's not stick to assert, that the Force of human Understanding could not go so far into the Knowledge of natural Things, as *Aristotle* appears to have done, without the peculiar Aid either of a good or evil Spirit. And it must be granted, that as he gives us a Rehearsal of all that had been propos'd in *Physicks* before his Time, in order to refute it; so there has scarce been any Thing rationally advanc'd in this Science, which did not pass thro' his Invention, and derive it's Principles from his Store. But because Men either seldbm study him in the Original,

ginal, or seldom understand him, they are too apt to take what he approves for what he rejects, and what he rejects for what he approves. And 'twas this produc'd that frequent Contradiction among his Followers, who to gain the Support and Honour of his Authority, brought him to their Side whether he would or no. And then 'tis not strange they should so miserably lose themselves, when they had first compell'd their Guide to go astray.

IV.

Yet let us not be dazzled with this Splendor of *Aristotle's* Name and Glory; let us set aside the Voice of so many Ages, and the Suffrage of all the Learned concurring in his Favour. Let us view *Aristotle* as he appears in himself; let us observe how he has managed the Subject of natural Philosophy, that great Rock upon which so many of his Profession have split, and that we may pass the more equitable Judgment on his Doctrine, let us first consider it in its Principles. We may expect that so great a Genius, and so much above the ordinary Standard, could not proceed, but by uncommon Ways. He begins therefore with a Kind of History of the Opinions of all the Philosophers before him; he desires to know all that others have said, that his Mind may be stor'd and replenish'd with his Matter, and he may deliver nothing but upon the fullest Information. And whereas *Plato* affected a personal View of all his learned Contemporaries of all Nations, and travell'd into *Egypt*, *Persia*, and *Italy*, to enjoy their Converse, and be satisfied of their Opinions; *Aristotle* shut himself up in his Study, to inspect and examine all that had been written upon the Subject of Nature, and upon this Examination to build his own Hypothesis, rejecting every Thing that made

made against it, and taking in every Thing that afforded it Countenance and Support. This is the first Draught of his Method; he offers nothing but what he is assur'd of by his perfect Comprehension of the several Doctrines advanced by his Predecessors. His Physicks are an Abridgment of those of *Pythagoras*, *Ocellus Lucanus*, *Timæus*, *Leucippus*, *Parmenides*, *Hippocrates*, *Melissus*, *Democritus*, and the rest of the elder Sages. And it may be affirm'd that he shews a greater Concern to destroy their Systems, than to establish his own. At least, *Joseph Scaliger*, who studied him very closely, appears to have been of this Judgment. The greatest Part of the ancient Naturalists asserted Things precariously, and utter'd their Fancies and imaginary Schemes. *Aristotle* alone search'd his Matter to the Bottom, prepared and disposed it, by ridding all contrary Tenets out of the Way, and pronounced upon nothing till he had defeated the opposite Assertion, which was his peculiar Talent. By this gradual Method his own Principles of Nature are introduc'd. For having refuted the Notion of *Parmenides* and *Melissus*, who held but one Principle, infinite and immovable; and having evinced the Absurdity of *Democritus*, *Empedocles*, *Anaxagoras*, &c. He substitutes his own three Principles, *Matter*, *Form* and *Privation*, as those by which we might best comprehend the Change that is made in all natural Productions; in which we always suppose somewhat that receives, and somewhat that is receiv'd; or some common Subject of the Form excluded, and the Form admitted in its Place: And this is so true and certain that we can form no Idea of a natural Generation without it. *Plato* who allow'd two of *Aristotle's* Principles, *Matter* and *Form*, did not distinguish

guish Privation from Matter; and therefore *Aristotle*, the Author of the Distinction, boasts of it as his own peculiar Work. And hence he affirms in the last Chapters of the first Book of his Physicks, that most of the Errors of ancient Philosophy, were owing to the Neglect of Philosophers, in not framing a clear and accurate Discernment between Matter and Privation. What he calls Form, is no more than the Cause and Original of the several Dispositions, Qualities and Operations, in every compound Being; or that which constitutes a Thing in its essential Perfections. Thus if we take these three Principles of *Aristotle*, as a proper Method to give us an Idea of what passes in the common Generation of Things, and to facilitate our Knowledge of Nature, they seem preferable to all that have been invented by other Authors. Let us now take a cursory View of the Series of his general Physicks.

Ex Car-
pent.
præf. in
Alcino.

V.

In the first Book he sets down the Method and Order of his following Design, and since the Face of Nature is so dark and obscure, he maintains that we ought to raise our Speculation by so many Steps and Degrees, from confus'd and inevident Notions to those that are Clear and Evident, and to descend in this Science, from Generals to Particulars: He adds that there is no other Way of illustrating the latter, but by bringing them to the notice of Sense, and by cloathing them in their proper Circumstances. Having settled this Method, in the remaining Part of the Book, he refutes the Principles of the other Philosophers, and establishes his own in their Room. In the second Book he discourses of Nature, and states the true Meaning and Import of that Term. In the same Book, as also in their Third, Fourth and

and Fifth, he treats of the Division of Causes, of Motion and Place, the Affection of natural Bodies. In the Sixth he explains the Nature of Quantity, and makes a just Treatise on that one Subject. He begins in his seventh Book to settle the Doctrine of a first Mover ; and in the eighth he speaks of Time, the natural Rule and Measure of Motion. He describes the heavenly Bodies, their Matters or Substance, their Qualities, Motion, Situation and Figure, and all that relates to the System of the World, in his first and second Book *de Cælo* : In the third and fourth, he treats of the Gravity and Levity of the heavenly Bodies, and of the different Opinions entertain'd by the Ancients on that Subject. In his first Book of *Meteors*, he represents those that are produc'd in the Air ; as in the third and fourth, those that are generated in the Earth and Sea : It is here that he accounts for Winds, and Thunder, and Lightning, and Exhalations ; for the Rainbow, and the *Parhelias*. In the fourth he discourses of Heat and Cold, of Driness and Moisture, of Putrefaction and of Salts, of the various Qualities of mixt Bodies, their Composition and Temperament. In his three Books of *the Soul*, he explains all that belongs to its Nature and Operations, whether in respect of the outward Senses, or of the inward Faculties. In his Book of *Parva Naturalia*, he enlarges more particularly on the Subject of Sensation, Memory, and Reminiscence, of Sleeping and Waking, of Dreams, and the Prognosticks of Dreams, of the Motions of Animals, and their various Gate and Pace ; of the Length and Shortness of Life, of Youth and Old Age ; of Reputation, of Health and Sickness. The *History of Animals* is his Master-piece, and the most finish'd of all his Treatises of Nature

the four first Books are taken up with representing the different Species; and in the five last he examines their various Ways of Multiplication: He has enrich'd this whole Work, with a vast Number of Experiments, and curious Disquisitions; among which, upon a closer View, we may perhaps, observe the first Lines of all the famous Discoveries so much boasted of by modern Philosophy. I forbear to speak of his Book of Colours, his Treatise of Physiognomy, his mechanick Questions, his Problems, his Books of Plants, his two Books of Generation and Corruption, his Book *de Mundo*, compos'd for the Use of *Alexander* the Great, together with many other Pieces, in which he has handled all Manner of Subjects, and explain'd the Reason of all Things from the greatest to the least, as *Diogenes Laertius* remarks. And this obliges me to say in Conclusion, that *Aristotle's* natural Doctrine is the most ample and extensive that ever appear'd in the World; nothing having escap'd so vast a Genius, which stretch'd it self to the universal Compass of Beings.

Persecutus est Aristoteles animantium omnium ortus, vitus, figuras. Cic. de Fin. 9.

Naturam d Peripateticis sic investigatam ut nulla pars caelo, terra, maria, que pretermittitur. Cic. ibid.

VI.

This is what may be offer'd on the favourable Side, as to the natural Philosophy of *Aristotle*: Let us now consider what may be alledg'd against it; or what there is in it that may seem chiefly liable to Censure. The eight Books of Physicks appear confus'd, nor are they carried on with a natural Order and Dependance. The *Materia prima*, and the bringing of Forms out of this Matter, are both extreamly difficult to our Apprehension. The whole Treatise of Motion is dark and abstracted: The Arguments alledg'd to prove the Eternity of Motion, through the Course of the eighth Book, are unintelligi-

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ble;

ble; and that whole Book is of too metaphysical a Character. Nor are this Philosopher's Discourses of Time and Place, peculiar to the Subject of Physicks, since they agree likewise to spiritual Substances. His Doctrine of Time is borrow'd from *Archytas*, as that of Motion, is from *Ocellus*, and that concerning a Vacuum, from *Timæus*, as *Patricius* has inform'd us. What he advances in his first two Books *de Cælo*, as also in his Explication of Comets, of the Rainbow, and other Meteors, is by no means found true in all its Circumstances: But we ought to except his fourth Book of Meteors, which seems to be compiled with greater Accuracy than the rest. The Situation, that in his third Book *de Cælo*, he gives the Element of Fire, under the Concave of the Moon, agreeably to the Opinion of *Leucippus* and *Democritus*, has no Manner of Foundation: *Pythagoras* was of quite another Judgment in this Matter. In his second Book of Meteors, he pretends, that the Earth is uninhabitable under the Equinox, which is contradicted by Experience. But, what he delivers, as to the Eternity of the World, how false soever, may seem the most pardonable Mistake. He conceiv'd all Things to proceed from God in the Way of necessary Emanation, as the Light which we see darted from the Sun is coæval with the Solar Body. This seems to afford us an Advantage against the Heresy of the *Arians*, who would not acknowledge the Divine Word, to be *Principium a Principio*, or coeternal with the Father. Thus *Aristotle's* Error may be of Service against these Corruptions, who perhaps had not fallen into such an Extravagance, if they had hearken'd to the Reasonings of this Philosopher, though by himself misapplied. *Patricius* a Philosopher of *Venice*, in his Discussion

of the *Aristotelian* Doctrine, *Ramus* in his School of Physicks, and *Gassendus* in his Observations against the Peripateticks, report a great Number of Instances, in which *Aristotle* appears to have mistaken the Subject of Nature; especially about the Order and Construction of the heavenly Bodies, the History of Animals, the Anatomy of human Body, &c. I freely grant that the modern Philosophy, having been so far improv'd by Experiments of all Kinds, and so much assisted by the Benefit of newly invented Instruments, may have out-done *Aristotle's* Performance in many Particulars which Time alone could clear; and that the Opinions of the ancient Philosophers concerning the Heaven, and heavenly Bodies, recited by *Plutarch* in the second Tome of his Works, have been found, for the most part, to be false, by the Instruments and Observations of later Discoveries. To be brief, I acknowledge that *Aristotle* is less demonstrative in his Physicks, than in the other Parts of his Philosophy; that his Method is less accurate, and his whole Character and Conduct less accomplish'd. But we ought to impute this Default, rather to the Incapacity of the Matter, than to the Unskilfulness of the Workman: His Genius is always the same, and maintains an equal Force in all its Reasonings and Reflections. But Reason, howsoever extensive and universal it may seem, has its Bounds in certain Subjects, and if it transgresses those Bounds, it ventures too far, and is in Danger of losing itself.

VII.

As for the Judgment that we may make of all the other Naturalists, ancient or modern, it is as follows. We have no Remains of what the *Egyptians* perform'd in this Kind, except their Obser-

Com. in
Lib. de
Cœlo.
Ex Jos.
Scalig.
Epist. ad
Rhodom.
*Amicos in
quibus est
studium,
ad Græci-
am mitto,
ad Græcos
ire jubeo,
ut ea à
fontibus
potius
bauriant,
quam ri-
vulos con-
sectentur.*
Cic. Acad
Qu. 1.

*Nobilissi-
mus Philo-
sophorum
Democri-
tus, vir
præter al-
ios vene-
randus,
auctoritate
antiquâ
præditus.*

uations on the Heavens, and heavenly Bodies, which they were better acquainted with than other Nations, their Genius carrying them to Astrology and Prognosticks. *Simplician* tells us, that *Callisthenes*; at the Request of his Father *Aristotle*, sent into Greece the Observations that had been made by the *Chaldeans*, for almost two thousand Years before *Alexander*: And *Porphyry* declares that he himself had seen these Observations. What the *Phœnicians* and *Æthiopians* had written of Physicks, is lost with the Books of *Diodorus Siculus*, from the Fifth to the Eleventh. But the *Greeks*, who were Masters of all other Sciences, were so especially of this, in which they have written beyond the rest of the World; and may be styl'd the first Authors of natural Discoveries. For *Plutarch*, in his Life of *Nicias*, informs us, that *Anaxagoras*, and the other *Ionick* Philosophers of those Days, were purely Naturalists. The *Assyrians* properly speaking, knew no more than the first Elements of Astronomy, by their inaccurate Observations, made without the Help of Instruments: for they had no other Way of measuring the Cælestial Motions, but by Water-dials. Among the Philosophers of Greece, *Pythagoras* and *Ocellus*, *Archytas* and *Timeus*, Disciples to the latter, *Hippocrates*, *Leucippus* and *Democritus* applied themselves to the Study of Nature, and adorn'd it with more Success than others. *Democritus* appears to have been a very eminent Naturalist. *Aulus Gellius* gives him a wonderful Encomium. *Empedocles* compos'd a System of Physicks in Verse, according to *Pythagoras's* Principles, which *Lucretius* speaks of as a Prodigy, and which is likewise mention'd by *Aristotle*, and

Ex materia in se omnia recipiente mundum factum esse censet Plato.
Cic. Qu. Acad. 4.

Diogenes

Diogenes Laertius. *Plato* has scarce ever written any Thing on this Subject, but what he borrow'd from the *Pythagoreans*. The Opinion of *Democritus*, which had a great Number of Followers, before and after *Aristotle*, and which has been revived by the modern Naturalists, of the greatest Reputation, seems to offer somewhat more real and sensible by the Doctrine of *Atoms*, than *Aristotle* has done in his Matter, Form, and Privation. But besides that he establishes Matter without a Mover, and Art without an Artificer, his Doctrine which is the same with that of *Leucippus*, upon a nearer View betrays so many Absurdities, that it cannot easily pass it self upon us. *Socrates* finding this Part of Philosophy to be utterly spoil'd and corrupted by the false Reasonings of the Sophists, applied himself entirely to Morals. And therefore when introduced by *Plato*, as speaking on the Subject of Nature, he does not always speak his own Sense. *Theophrastus's* Book of Plants is one of the finest natural Treatises of all Antiquity, in the Judgment of *Julius Scaliger*, who has commented on it. *Zeno* the Prince of the Stoicks, has nothing particular in his Physicks, only that he uses a different Expression, from others, though he is the same in Opinion. He establishes two Principles, God and Matter: He supposes a Soul of the World, diffus'd through all its Parts, and informing it, as one great Animal. *Lipsius* has given us an Abridgement of this Philosopher's Physicks, as well as of his Ethicks. *Epicurus* has nothing fix'd and certain in his Doctrine of Nature; but is perpetually upon the Ramble. *Cicero* observes of him, that as he embraced De-

Zeno aliter loquebatur atque omnes, sentiebat idem quod ceteri.

Cic. de Fin. 4. Inter Zenonem & Peripateticos nihil interesse prater verborum novi-

tatem. Ibid.

In physicis quibus maximè gloriatur Epicurus, totus alienus est. Cic. de Fin. 4.

Democri-
to adjecit
per pauca
mutans,
sed ita, ut
qua corri-
gere vult,
depravare
videatur.
Idem de
Fin. 1,
Epicuro
duo esse
principia
corpus &
inane.
Serv. in
Æn. 6.
Rerum na-
turâ cog-
nitâ su-
perstitione
levamur,
mortis me-
tu non
conturba-
mur igno-
ratione
rerum ex
quâ horri-
biles exi-
stunt for-
midines.
Cic. de
Fin. 1.

Democritus's Opinion, so the Change he made in it was much for the worse. He only took Shelter in the Science of Nature, against the Terrors of Religion. A *Vacuum* and *Atoms* are the Principles upon which he builds. 'Tis no Wonder his Disciples should have so little Insight into the Nature of Motion, since they were entirely Strangers to the Nature of Time and Place, which are of metaphysical Consideration. Yet in spite of all this, *Lucretius* has represented his Master *Epicurus*, as the greatest of Philosophers and of Men, in those high Elogies he has bestow'd on him in several Parts of his Poem; especially in the Entrance of his third Book, where he speaks of him in a Strain, that makes him somewhat more than a Mortal. *Amaphanius* whom *Cicero* mentions, differ'd in nothing from *Epicurus*, whose Doctrine he committed to Writing. *Chrysippus's* Book of Nature and of natural Things, is cited by *Plutarch*, and highly commended by *Phavorinus*. The chief Remains of the ancient *Græcian* Naturalists, we meet with in the Fragments collected by *Diogenes Laertius*. We are promis'd from *Florence* a general Body of the ancient Physicks by *Racellai*, in which he has given the Draughts of thirty six different Systems. But as this Work, which is written in *Italian*, and will make twelve Volumes, could not be publish'd before the Authors Death, so we have Reason to fear, that the Publick will never be oblig'd with it, since the general Loss that the learned World has had in the Cardinal *de Medicis*, who alone could have promoted the Impression.

VIII.

Tho' the *Romans* scarce made any Efforts in natural Philosophy, but ought to yield that Honour to the *Greeks*; yet have they left us some

very

very excellent Pieces on that Subject. Nothing was ever written in purer *Latin*, or with a more polite Air than *Lucretius's* Poem on the Philosophy of *Epicurus*, which *Lambin* prefers even to *Virgil*, for the Accuracy and Propriety of Expression, tho' nothing certainly can be more dangerous in respect of Morals and Principles. *Cicero*, who of all the *Romans*, best understood and best explain'd the *Græcian* Philosophy, speaks so dubiously of it, that we cannot easily determine what Hypothesis he valued above the rest. Those who best apprehend his Meaning, think he embraces no particular Sect, but rallies them All: Yet we may perceive that *Plato* and *Aristotle* were his Favourites. *Seneca* seems to have quite mistaken the preceptory Stile, in his Books of *natural Questions*. He makes very nice and curious Reflections, where 'twas only requisite to use the greatest Plainness and Simplicity; and affects to moralize where he ought only to be natural. No *Latin* Author has written so largely of Physicks, or with so much Elegance, as *Pliny*. The Idea of his Work seems to be one of the greatest Designs that was ever form'd by Man. He is the general Historian of Nature, who tells us his Opinion of every Thing, and always tells it finely. He has given a vast Number of Curiosities, which had been lost, but for his Care in preserving them. Yet if we consult *Salmasius's* Observations upon *Pliny*, we shall find, that this great Author many times suffer'd himself to be impos'd upon by those that furnish'd him with Memoirs for his History; that he often goes out of his Way, in hopes of riding the more Ground; that he is over credulous in following other Mens Opinions, and too precipitate in giving his own; that in his Reports, he very often considers more the Beauty of

Pintian.
Rhenan.

Zeglerus
Beciche-
mius,

Words, than the Truth of Things; and that the necessity he is often under of relying upon the Integrity of others, brings his own into Suspicion. Not but that he has had his Defenders in these latter Days, who affirm that most of those Relations which have been some time doubted of, have at length, upon full Enquiry, been found to be true. Yet 'tis my Opinion, that we cannot so well depend upon these Authors, as upon *Salmasius*, who has illustrated *Pliny* with greater Learning than all before him; and that we cannot deny, but that *Pliny's* Work is of too wide a Compass to be exact. However, it must be confess'd to be one of the noblest Designs of Antiquity.

Plutarch, *Dioscorides*, *Alian*, and *Solinus*, have farther improv'd and enrich'd the Science of Physicks, each in his Way. *Plutarch* is rather a Moralist than a Naturalist. *Dioscorides* is rather a Physician than a Philosopher. *Alian* is rather an Historian; and *Solinus* rather a Geographer. *Galen* form'd his System of Nature upon the Model of *Hippocrates*; and he is largely beholden to *Pliny*, whom he studied with great Application. The learned Men of the following Ages were divided, as their Inclination led them, in Favour of *Plato* or *Aristotle*, as were particularly *Avicenna* and *Averroes*. The School-men took the same Way, in that Age which they seem to have govern'd. Yet the major Part embrac'd the *Aristotelian* System, notwithstanding all that Heat and Animosity with which they oppos'd each other. And the Schools, in spite of their Pride and Conceit, shew'd so much Fidelity and Honour in this respect, as for the space of three hundred Years to advance nothing on the Subject of Nature, but what was agreeable to the Doctrine of *Aristotle*.

IX. Modern

Modern Physicks may date their Rise and Origin from the Age immediately preceeding ours. *Galilei* a *Florentine* was the first that fram'd this Plan and Design, upon the Principles of *Leucippus*. He was happy in a strong and solid Genius, and by his perfect Knowledge of *Astronomy* and *Geometry*, reason'd better upon the Nature of Motion, than any before or since. He was the first that found out the Proportion of the Vibration of Pendulums, and the Acceleration of the Motion of heavy Bodies in their Descent; the Principles of which Doctrine he borrows from *Aristotle*. He had more of the Peripatetick in him than any of his Successors; but had the Skill to give a very modern Turn and Air, to what he learnt of the Ancients. For he reform'd and enrich'd *Copernicus's* System of the World; and by the Use of the Telescope discover'd many new Stars, observ'd the Spots in the *Sun*, found out Mountains and Valleys in the *Moon*, and distinguish'd the Phases of the Planet *Venus*. He shew'd a great Force in all his Reasonings upon the Idea of that new Motion which he invented; and he rais'd so eminent a Reputation in *Italy*, as to be esteem'd the Author and Founder of *modern Philosophy*. Nor did *Bacon* less revive the Love of Philosophy in *England*. He had a vast and comprehensive Genius for the Study of Nature, but succeeded in no Part better than in his History of the Winds; tho' he appears sometimes too easie and credulous in admitting the Memoirs that were sent to him on that Subject. The rest of his Physicks is not of the same Strength or Accuracy; yet he always shews some Strokes of his Genius and Character. His Writings contributed exceedingly to the engaging his Countrymen in
natural

natural Pursuits, who have, in great Numbers, imitated his Passion for Nature, and have carried experimental Knowledge to a high and flourishing Condition: *Toricelli*, *Viniani*, and *Vanhelmont*, all three of the Academy of *Firenze*, have written excellently well of Motion. *Gassendi* is an Author never enough to be admir'd. We find no Philosopher of all Antiquity, that has left a Work of such Extent, (no less than six great Volumes) compos'd with so much Art and Force. He is indeed but the Restorer of *Epicurus's* Theory, which he has improv'd and manag'd by *Galileo's* Doctrine of Motion; in all other Respects he is an *Epicurean*, soften'd and mitigated by Principles of Conscience. He acknowledges the Creation of Atoms, which *Epicurus* denied; he maintains that they receive from God their Motion, Extension, and Figure, all which *Epicurus* would have to be essentially and originally in themselves; he asserts a Providence, which that Philosopher excluded from his System; in a word, he makes *Epicurus* an honest Man, being really such himself. But notwithstanding his great Temper and Moderation, he has us'd *Aristotle* with the utmost Severity; whom, on many Occasions, he charges with Ignorance, Folly, and Extravagance. As for *Vanhelmont*, who will allow nothing to be rational in *Aristotle's* System, it must be own'd that he had very little Judgment, and that *Paracelsus* had turn'd his Head. *Campanella's* Treatise of *Physicks*, in which he gives Sense to the smallest and most insensible Things, and pretends to animate every Part of Nature, is a meer Whim and Fancy, such as he lov'd to indulge. Yet *Telesius* has embrac'd this Opinion in his Discourse against *Galen*; he is over presumptuous in his Decisions, and often corrects *Aristotle* with

with great Pride and little Reason. *Gilbert* has best display'd the several Experiments of the Load-stone. *Harvey* has reason'd with the greatest Judgment upon the Progress of the Generation of Animals, and upon the Circulation of the Blood. *Fromondus* has written best of Meteors; *Savot* of Colours; *Mersennus* of Sounds and Harmony; *Willis* of the Brain, and its Parts; *Grew* of the Anatomy of Plants. *Flud* seems very deficient in good Sense: He may be stil'd the *Paracelsus* of Philosophers, as *Paracelsus* the *Flud* of Physicians; these two Genius's seem little different in Complexion. *Gassendus* has written very handsomely against *Flud's* Physicks. *Borellus* is a good Geometrician and Naturalist, but without any metaphysical Principles; which Defect renders his Positions very uncertain. *Thomas Hobbes*, in his Physicks, has shewn a Depth of Wit; but as he is the boldest and most through-pac'd *Epicurean* of these later Times, without any Mitigation, or Allay, he has reason'd very absurdly as to the Nature of the Understanding, and its principal Operations; which he refers wholly to the Fancy and Imagination. *Boyle* is a true and rational Genius, who has very much enrich'd natural Philosophy by his Experiments and Remarks, such as are always solid and well-grounded.

X.

But, after all, to do Justice to our own Nation, and to the Memory of *Descartes*, we must acknowledge, that his System of Physicks is one of the most subtile, and the most accomplish'd that have been publish'd by the Moderns; that he has some very curious and very fine Conceptions; and that, upon a nearer View, his Theory will appear to be more regular and consistent than that of *Galilei*, or of the English Authors.

Authors. We shall likewise find, that he exceeds *Gassendus* in Point of Novelty and Invention. In a Word, his System is well digested, and put into an agreeable Order; his Method is entirely Geometrical, proceeding from Principle to Principle, from Proposition to Proposition. But let us consider in what Respects he is liable to Censure. His Principles of Nature, are Motion, Figure, and Extension; very little different from those of *Democritus* and *Epicurus*. There goes a pleasant Story, that Father *Mersennus*, who was his Resident at *Paris*, having declar'd in a Meeting of learned Men, that *Descartes*, who had already establish'd a good Character by his Geometry, was upon a Project of Physicks, in which he admitted a *Vacuum*, the Design was scouted by *Robentual* and others, who judg'd from hence, that it could contain nothing extraordinary. Upon which Father *Mersennus* writ to *Descartes*, to let him know that a *Vacuum* was not modish at *Paris*; and this oblig'd him to find out some sort of Temperament, and some way of compounding with the modern Naturalists, whose Approbation he much courted; and, in order to this, to admit the *Plenum* of *Leucippus*; and thus his Exclusion of a *Vacuum* was owing to a Principle of Politics. But here *Gassendus* put him under new Difficulties, giving him to understand, that without a *Vacuum*, his Principle of Motion would be absurd and impossible; because nothing can move in an absolute *Plenum*. *Descartes* to remedy this Inconvenience, invented his subtile Matter, which serv'd him for a good Expedient in many Exigencies, and was a Salvo for the Doctrine either of a *Vacuum* or a *Plenum*, as he had Occasion to make use of them. But this *Plenum*, and this subtile Matter being ad-
ded

ded only as a Shift, and in Compliance with the Humour of the Age, *Descartes's* System was left very weak and unguarded in the whole Doctrine of Motion, which is one of his main Principles: For he tells us, That all the Motion now in the World was created at the Beginning of Things, and that there's no new Motion produc'd, but the old communicated and transmitted from one Body to another; that the Impulsion of subtile Matter is the Cause of all Gravity or Levity in Bodies; that the Acceleration of heavy Bodies in their Motion towards the Center, proceeds from the same Impulsion; that Heat is nothing but a Motion of the Particles of the Air, agitated by the subtile Matter, which is the *Fac-totum* of the *Cartesian* Physicks; that the Vegetation of Plants, and Generation of Animals, are caus'd only by the fortuitous Motion of little Particles; as if Stones by a chance Leap, should range themselves into an orderly and beautiful Palace; that Brutes are utterly destitute of all Sensation; that the Tokens which they sometimes discover of Joy, of Friendship, of Aversion, of Sadness, together with all the Impressions of Pleasure, or Pain, are but the Result of certain Springs that play in the Machine, according as the Matter is dispos'd; that Heat is not in the Fire, nor Hardness in the Marble, nor Moisture in the Water; but that all this is in the Soul, which by Thought and Reflection finds the Fire to be hot, the Marble hard, and the Water moist; and by no means in any such Qualities, which are meerly fictitious. In short, *Descartes*, who insists upon it as a Preliminary, that we should entertain a general Doubt of all Things, that we should shut up all our Lights, should divest our selves of all our pre-conceived Opinions, of Custom,

Custom, of Education, of Sense and Judgment, and all other Impressions whatsoever, and all this only that we may arrive at some little and scanty Notice of Things, makes his Promises vastly disproportionable to his Demands. And when in order to the explaining the Nature of Things, he says they are caus'd by a certain Figure, a certain Motion, and a certain Extension, he has said all that he can; for he never goes into the Depth of a Subject; and tho' he professes himself a Follower of *Democritus*, yet he is unacquainted with the true Doctrine of that Philosopher. His Hypothesis of the Load-Stone, with those little hooked Bodies, is arbitrary and groundless. His Account of the Ebbing and Flowing of the Sea, by the Impression of the Moon's Atmosphere, is found to be false; those Parts of the Water that are subject to the lunar Body being indeed rais'd, and not, as he conceives, depress'd. His Explication of the Motion of the Soul in the several Passions, by the Conjunction of the Nerves and Fibres, terminating in the *Glandula pinealis*, is pure *Chimera*, there being really no Nerves that terminate in that Gland. On the Nature of Sounds, he advanced nothing that looks like a rational Conjecture. In a Word, he may not be unfitly resembled to those *Pythagoreans* mention'd by *Aristotle*, who were less solicitous to render the true Reason of Things, than to reduce all to their own Principles and System. Yet as he aim'd rather at the Ostentation of Wit, than the Discovery of the Truth, his Physicks may afford some Sort of Satisfaction to those who are moderate enough to take up with Probabilities. However, we can by no means defend the Haughtiness of some of his Disciples, who treat all other Philosophers as meer Ideots, because

cause they themselves have had the Fortune to make some Noise, by representing Philosophy under a new Dress; as Novelties are always agreeable and surprizing.

XI. The Chymists, with their three Principles of Salt, Sulphur, and Mercury, have advanced nothing solid in the Doctrine of Nature; they are a Sort of separate Traders in Philosophy, who not being able to embrace it in its full Extent and Compass, have chose a bounded Subject to exercise their limited Genius. We may reduce them to three Tribes or Orders; the first, of those who prosecute the Study of Nature in general; the second, of those who prepare Medicines; the third, of those who labour in the Transmutation of Metals, by giving them new Figures, new Colours, or new Consistences. Those of the first and second Class may be allow'd to be rational Enquirers; such as were *Albertus Magnus*, *Vankelmont*, and the Distillers. Those of the third are extravagant Pretenders, such as would usurp upon the Rights of the Creator, in attempting to produce new Creatures. As for the *Cabalists*, and the Judicial Astrologers, nothing can be more absurd, than what they give us, for the Doctrine of Physicks; and therefore I shall not trouble my self, or the Reader with it; nor with that of *Cardan*, entirely contain'd in his Book *de Subtilitate*. This I cannot excuse my self from saying, that the *Royal Society* for the Improvement of natural Knowledge in *England*, the Academy of Philosophers establish'd some Time since by the King's Order at *Paris*, the great Industry used by the late Cardinal *de Medicis*, to excite the Learned by his Encouragement and Example, together with the new History of Experiments,

Experiments, publish'd by his Care some Years ago at *Florence*; have so happily reviv'd the Love of natural Philosophy in the present Age; that there's scarce any Study more in Request with the ingenious in all Parts of *Europe*: And their Endeavours have been follow'd with so good Success that we may affirm, There have been within this sixty Years past, more Discoveries made in Nature by Experiments and Observations, and by the Invention of new astronomical Instruments, than had been made in two thousand Years before. They have found out the Way to distinguish the several Affections of the Air by the *Thermometer*; they have made new Descriptions of the Body of the Moon, by a Chart representing its monthly *Phases*, with the Variety of those Appearances that are caus'd by the Shade of its eminent or depress'd Parts, resembling our Mountains and Vallies: They have calculated the Revolutions of the Stars, with as much Exactness as the Movement of a Watch or the Stroke of a Dial; and it is but in our Age, or a little before it, that Men have been able to find some Sort of Irregularity in the heavenly Bodies, the most regular Works of Nature. In a word, by the late honourable Emulation among the Naturalists of *France*, *Italy*, *England* and *Holland*, the World seems to have chang'd its Face, the Heavens to rowl upon other Principles, and new Systems; the Air has been more clear'd and illuminated, by the Doctrine of Meteors; the Sea has been rendred more free and easie to Commerce, by the Improvements of Navigation; the Earth has been laid open to our View, by the perfect Knowledge of Simples and Compounds, of Salts and Minerals; and all the Circle of Arts has been enlarg'd and ennobled by useful Inventions.

ventions. Experimental Knowledge has been carried to a great and eminent Height, and Men have been of late imploy'd in retrieving those Lights of Sciences, which were clouded and obscured by the Negligence of former Ages. What shall I say of the new and excellent Discoveries of the secret Springs of Nature, in the Motion of the Heart, the Circulation of the Blood, the Contexture of the Brain, and the whole Oeconomy of Human Bodies; or of those surprizing Wonders display'd in the smallest Insects, as Flies, &c. upon which the *English* have lately publish'd a large Volume, full of curious Observations, hitherto in a Manner unknown to the World? If they proceed with equal Vigour in their Remarks upon particular Nature, which they have begun to make in all the Parts of the World, to which their Commerce opens them a Passage, they will be able in a little time, to give us a second Volume of natural History, worthy to be added as a Continuation to that of *Pliny*. To enter here into the Detail of all the Natural Discoveries that have been made by the Study and Application of modern Philosophers, would be an endless Labour. But I cannot omit to report how much this Science has been enrich'd by the Works of Monsieur *le Chambre*, first Physician in ordinary to the King; who has written upon the Principles of *Aristotle*, with greater Solidity and Elegance than most Authors; never was so dry and barren a Subject adorn'd with so much Grace: Yet do's not the Beauty of his Stile impair the Force of his Reasonings, nor the Ornaments of his Expression diminish the Gravity of his Matter: We may affirm that he is the most polite, and at the same time, the most substantial of the Moderns; and that if Nature

It

were

were to give an Account of her own System, she would choose to express her self in his Language.

XII.

*Honos alit
artes, om-
nesque in-
cenduntur
ad studia
gloriâ;
jacentque
ea semper
quæ apud
quosque
improban-
tur. Cic. I.
Tusc.
Usus &
experien-
tia domi-
nantur ar-
tibus, ne-
que ulla
est disci-
plina, in
quâ non
peccando
discatur.
Colum. de
R. P. C. I.*

*Non tem-
pus nobis
deesse,
ærum in-
dustriam,*

To wind up these Reflections upon Physicks, let us observe what Means may chiefly contribute to the Perfection of this Science, which has been of late so much in Favour, and what Disadvantages are most likely to obstruct the Progress it has so justly made in the Minds and Studies of Men. Since therefore, Honour and Emulation is the very Soul of Arts and Sciences, we cannot pay too much Regard to those whose Genius and Inclination engage them in the Pursuit of natural Knowledge, which is so highly beneficial to Society. But neither can we too strictly caution them against suffering themselves to be surpriz'd by new unexamin'd Opinions, and against espousing other Mens Notions, only upon the Strength of Faction and Cabal: This kind of Spirit must be wholly laid aside, as one of the greatest Obstacles to the Increase of Knowledge, and to the Discernment of the Truth. Let us advise them to secure and fortifie their Mind, by the Use and Experience of Things, so as to be Proof against the Charms of pleasing Errors, and to divest themselves of that natural Pre-possession which Men are wont to entertain in Favour of their own Conceptions. Let us desire them, neither to be inquisitive, without being somewhat yielding and tractable, nor to be too tractable and docile, without being somewhat inquisitive. For, as a general Curiosity without any Submission, betrays Men into Error;

ordinem, rationem & modum sciendi. Quint. XII. 10.

so an absolute Submission, without any Curiosity, leads them into Ignorance. They will do well to consider, that altho' Reason and Experience are the two only Ways by which the Knowledge of Nature can be attain'd, yet neither can Reasoning without Experiments, be sure and solid, nor can Experiments without Reasoning, be exact and regular. Nor ought they to be over-solicitous of gratifying the Humour of the Publick, by rare and novel Discoveries; as it has been the Vanity of many modern philosophers to study less the advancing Things that are useful, than Things that are agreeable. These are some of the Rules that may be given to philosophical Enquirers, in order to the imprinting upon their Spirit that true and solid Character, without which their Enquiries can never be rightly manag'd; nothing being so repugnant to Science, as Illusion on the one Hand, or Uncertainty on the other. In a Word, tho' the System of universal Physicks cannot easily receive any Addition, or be improv'd by new Principles or Methods, as consisting in a limited Perfection, and being circumscribed within a few general Rules; yet the Doctrine of particular Nature is of so vast an Extent, as to be always capable of further Advances and Improvements. Whatsoever new Light we may discover in it, there are innumerable others still reserv'd for our Discovery; and this great Deep, howsoever it may seem to have been drain'd by the Study of so many Genius's, and the Course of so many Ages, will still prove it self to be endless and inexhaustible.

XIII.

The last Reflection that seems necessary to be made upon this Science, arises from the ordi-

nary Process of natural Enquirers, who in their Reasonings are wont to refer all to Nature, enlarging its Commission, and extending its Power and Virtue beyond those Bounds which the Author of Nature has prescrib'd. This was the Fault of *Alcindus*, whom *Averroes* extols, as one of the greatest Genius's the World ever saw. Indeed, he appears to have had a large Comprehension; but then he compos'd a Treatise, to prove, that all those Effects result from material Nature, which are commonly attributed to Spirits above Nature, that is, to Angels or Dæmons. In the same manner *Peter d' Apono* and *Pomponatius*, two great Patrons of Nature, attempted to demonstrate, that whatever passes in the Course of sublunary Things, is owing to the Impression of the heavenly Bodies. For as *Galen* ascrib'd all to Complexion and Constitution, *Albertus Magnus* to the specifick Form, and *Marcilius Ficinus*, to the Planets, so *Peter d' Apono* reduc'd all to the Influence of the Heavens; and acknowledg'd no Miracles besides the Turn and Change of Seasons, as we are assur'd by *Loyer* in his Book of *Spectres*, which gave Occasion to *Baptist* of *Mantua*, to stile him a Person of great, but too impudent and audacious Wisdom. It is a Weakness common to little and narrow Minds, to believe nothing but what they can comprehend. *Montagne* seems to be a Philosopher of this Character; he often commences Infidel, that he may appear easy and natural; and is the more dangerous in respect of Religion, the more he affects to seem unconcern'd about it. For by a Counterfeit Ingenuity, and Simplicity of good Sense, his merely Human Philosophy makes a deeper Impression upon Mens Spirits, while deliver'd with so free and negligent an Air. The *Cartesian* Physicks

Virum
magna sed
nimium au-
dacis sapi-
entia.
XII. de
Pat. 13.

sicks do not advance Thought and Spirit above the Pitch of external Sense, and go no higher than the Body to explain the most refin'd and exalted Operations of the Soul. An *English* H. More Professor has lately shewn this whole System of *Præfat.* Philosophy to be very prejudicial to Religion, *Enchirid.* in attributing all Effects to Art and Mechanism, *Meta-* *phys.* And indeed, generally speaking, natural Knowledge, in Conjunction with Physick, Astronomy and Chymistry, is apt so to tie Men down to visible Nature, as that they cannot ascend to the Author and Maker of It; it gives too much to Sense, to be able to get above the Power and Sphere of Sense, and creates a Diffidence of heavenly Things, by keeping its Eye constantly fix'd upon the Earth. A most unhappy Spirit of Philosophy this, and far from the Genius of a *Christian*, to refine upon the Knowledge of the Creature, and to be weak and doubtful as to Faith in the Creator. The very pagan Philosophers of Old, acted and thought above this Character; for as they surpass'd many of *us* in great and worthy Conceptions, so they carried their Ideas still higher than *themselves*, by the Acknowledgment of a Divine and Sovereign Reason, which they establish'd as the Measure of their own Reasonings, and to which they paid an entire Submission. To conclude, let us contemplate Nature with Modesty and Caution, with Awe and Reverence; let us not be too bold in pronouncing upon those Operations, which we ought not to judge of without Trembling. For to criticize upon Nature, the Work of God, is in effect to criticize upon God him-

Quid aliud natura, quam Deus, & Divina ratio toti mundo inserta.
Sen. de Ben. l. 14.

Per que declaratur natura potentiam

id esse quod Deum vocamus. Plin. N. H. l. 2. Alphonfus, of Castile.

self, and to subject the Greatness of his Power to the Weakness of our Censure. Such was the impious Extravagance of that Prince, who desired to correct the Model of the World, by the vain and groundless Schemes of *Arabian* Philosophy. True Philosophy, when arriv'd at the Height and Top of its Perfection, never judges without a timorous Concern, nor ever determines without a modest Distrust of its self; because it knows its own Incapacity, by being sensible of the Infirmary and Imperfection of human Understanding. But when it treats of the divine Work, it imposes Silence upon all its Reasonings, and submits all its Lights; as the Cherubims in the Prophet, stoop their Wings, and veil their Faces, and prostrate themselves before the Throne of God, to confess and adore his Greatness and Majesty in their own Abasement and Humility.

REFLECTIONS UPON METAPHYSICKS.

I.

A *S Physicks* is the Science of Things natural and sensible, so *Metaphysicks* is the Science of Things purely intellectual. All other Sciences have a necessary Dependence on this latter; for 'tis this supplies them with a Foundation and a Method to proceed upon, without which our Knowledge of any Subject must be very confus'd and imperfect. This was probably the Reason that engag'd *Aristo.* *Metaphys* to stile this Science the true Beginning of ^{l. VI. XI.} Philosophy, and the most noble of all the Sciences. As it is wholly conversant in the Acts of the Understanding, it raises it self above the Verge of Sense and Matter, by its abstracted Views of corporeal and incorporeal Beings. The Quantity of Bodies it refers to the Consideration of Geometry, and their sensible Qualities to natural Philosophy, applying it self only to Beings separated from their individual Singularity, such as are Substances, Accidents. Relations, Oppositions, and what-

ibid.

whatsoever may be conceiv'd by Abstraction from Matter; and among these chiefly exercising its Speculations about Substances purely spiritual, such as the Soul of Man, Angels, and God himself; in which Regard it may seem to deserve the Character of Divine, and is accordingly term'd by *Aristotle*, natural Divinity. The End of this Science is the Search and Study of pure and abstracted Truth. That it may know Things to the very Bottom, it views them in their first Source and Origin; it enters into the Account of particular Species; and because that is almost infinite, it reduces them under general Heads. So that without its Assistance all human Knowledge must be very superficial and defective; because there's scarce any such Thing as a true Demonstration to be obtain'd, but by the Light of its Principles.

Aristotle's Design in his *Metaphysics*, is to furnish out Principles and Maxims for other Sciences, of which in themselves they are unprovided, and to establish a chief and sovereign Truth, which might be the Measure and Standard of all other Truths. He has left us twelve Books on this Subject, of which the three first are preliminary or introductive. In the first Book, he teaches, that Memory is form'd by the Perceptions of Sense; that Experience is form'd by Memory, and Art and Science by Experience. He observes, that *Sapience*, being a perfect Knowledge of first Principles, is preferable to Science; that Things cannot be rightly known, but by their Causes; that the ancient Philosophers, for Want of Method and Regularity, sometimes hit upon the Truth, without being able to assign the Reason. He tells us, the Impressions we receive from Education

Usus efficacissimus
omnium
magister.
Plin. NH.
XXVI.

and

and Custom are great Impediments in our Way to Knowledge, and that if we would be exactly inform'd, we must take the Method that is most agreeable to the Subject of our Enquiry. He shews in the third Book, that we must begin to doubt, 'ere we can begin to be assur'd, and must distinctly conceive the Nature of Falshood, if we would nicely apprehend that of Truth. He refutes the Method of explaining Nature by Fables, which had been common to *Pythagoras* and *Plato*. In the same Book, he examines this Question, Whether there be any one Science, that may propose all other Sciences for its Object. He concludes, with stating the Nature of Substance, and enquiring whether there be any other Substances besides those which fall under the Notice of Sense; whether any Idea's, or any first Matter. Having by these necessary Questions, prepar'd the Way to his Design, in the fourth Book, he treats of the principal Object of Metaphysicks, which is *Being* abstracted from Matter, or *Being* consider'd in the precise Notion of *Being*. In the fifth Book, he explains several Attributes of *Being* in Common, and fixes the general Notion of metaphysical Terms. The sixth Book is a new *Apparatus*, or Introduction to those that follow. In the seventh Book, he gives us the Definition of Substance, the first and Chief of Beings, he acquaints us with its essential Properties, and shews us how it differs from Accident. In the eighth Book, he distinguishes between material and immaterial Substance. 'Tis here that he speaks of substantial Forms, and touches upon *Pythagoras's* Numbers, and *Plato's* Ideas, which he maintains to have nothing real or substantial in them. The ninth Book is an Explication of the different Species of Being, of Act and Power,

Power of Things actual and potential, of their proper Notion and Distinction; concluding with a Discourse of Truth and Falshood. In the tenth Book, he considers the Nature of Unity which is the first Property of Being, and shews how it stands oppos'd to Plurality: He declares how, and after how many different Manners, one Thing may be contrary to another; and lays down this whole Doctrine of Contrariety, upon which most of the Principles in Metaphysicks are founded. In the eleventh Book, he resumes the Consideration of several Things before establish'd in the Third and Fourth, and among others the Necessity of the Art of Doubting, in order to that of knowing. For he that doubts is in a much better Disposition of finding out the Truth, than he that does not; because the former builds the Assurance of his Judgment upon the clearing up of his Uncertainties. In the twelfth Book, having prov'd that there are substantial Forms, he proves likewise that there are Substances separate from Body, or that there are Spirits. This whole Discourse tends to the Demonstration of a first Mover, or a divine Cause and Author of all Things. The two Books that follow were not extant in the Time of *Thomas Aquinas*. *Posssevinus* maintains that they are not *Aristotle's*: But since we find in them the same Character, the same Genius, and the same Way of Reasoning, learned Men are not always of the same Judgment with that Critick. Indeed in the thirteenth Book we meet with some Repetitions, as to *Pythagoras's* Numbers, and *Plato's* Ideas; but the Fourteenth is an admirable Collection of Axioms, Principles, Divisions and Definitions, gather'd out of the preceeding Book. And tho' the whole System is not rang'd into a very exact Order, and has too much Repetition

petition in several Places, yet still it is a noble Fund of Notions, and Reasonings, and Maxims, and Truths, such as are excellently useful in opening the Way to all the other Parts of Knowledge: And he that would be a true Philosopher or would obtain a thorough Discernment of Things, cannot make Use of a better Preparative or Direction, than *Aristotle's* Metaphysics.

III.

It is particularly remarkable, That *Aristotle* seems to have been the first Founder and Invention of this abstracted Method of Reasoning; and this Consideration of immaterial Beings, of Spirits and of God Himself. For his Predecessors in Philosophy deliver'd scarce any Thing that was good and solid upon these Subjects. Indeed *Pythagoras*, by his Travels into *Egypt*, learnt the Unity of the God-head, from the *Hebrews*, and taught it to the *Greeks*. But the *Egyptians*, being by their natural Temper mysterious and visionary, *Pythagoras* borrow'd most of their Visions, as to Spirits and Intelligences; which they invested with fine and subtile Bodies, and fill'd the World with their airy Train. And, therefore he was the first of the Philosophers, that made Way, by this Conceit, for all the Extravagances of the Cabalists, in Regard to Spirits, and for all those legendary Tales, which the Author of *Gabalus* would have reviv'd and brought again upon the Stage in these latter Days. *Plato*, who seems to establish the like Doctrine in his *Epinomis* and *Cratinus*, took it from *Pythagoras*, and *Zeno* afterwards transcrib'd

Diog.
Laert. in
Pythag.
Omnes
partes
mundi
animarum
esse plenas:
intra Lu-
na gyrum
aeris esse

animas. Varro, apud Aug de C. Dei.

Non aera aestate muscis, tam plenum esse, quam geniis. Lypf.

Phyf. Stoic,

it

*Nulla se- it from Plato, as Lipsius has inform'd us at large.
 Et majori Apuleius pretends that Plato has of all the an-
 successu cient Philosophers, spoken most worthily of God
 de divinis and Providence, of divine Things and of Spi-
 rebus Phi-rits. It must indeed be confess'd, that he seems
 losophata, more knowing than others in these Subjects.
 quam Pla- But since he generally goes upon Pythagoras's
 tonis, qui Scheme, we cannot follow him with Safety.
 celo ipso Tertullian reports, that the Platonists, as well as
 sublimiora the Stoicks, apprehended God under a corporeal
 vestigavit. Figure. Aristotle, whose Genius was of a more
 Apuleius just and real Character, speaks after a different
 in Apol. Manner. He knew how to separate the Dreams
 Platonici of the Pythagoreans, from those solid Truths
 corpora- which he had learnt in their Schools. As for
 lem deum Epicurus, his Deities bear so mean and ridiculous
 statuunt. a Part, that in effect he destroys them by Introdu-
 Tertul. cing them. Zeno exposes them to like Contempt
 Apol. by placing his wise Man in a State so independent
 Deos jo- from them, and giving him Leave to think of them
 candi cau- as he pleases. Chrysippus writ some Tracts of
 sa induxit Divinity and of the divine Nature ; mention'd by
 Epicurus Plutarch in his Morals, but long since lost.
 pellucidos, seems very likely that he proceeded upon Zeno's
 & persla- Principles. But Antiquity affords nothing of
 biles. this Subject, compos'd with so much Strength of
 Cic. Tuf. Reason, as Cicero's Books of the Nature of the Gods.
 5. His Sentiments are as just, and his Doctrine as
 Stoici ro- good and sound, as merely Heathen Theology
 tundam could produce. And the Reason why he speaks
 Deo dede- better than other Men, is because he chiefly
 runt for- speaks upon Aristotle's Judgment, and makes use
 mam. of his Arguments in the Proof of a Providence.
 Senec. Seneca is but a poor Smatterer in Theology : His
 Epist. 94. Notion of the Deity as the universal Soul of
 Philoso- the Universe, is but a poor Smatterer in Theology : His
 phia mihi Notion of the Deity as the universal Soul of
 promittit, the Universe, is but a poor Smatterer in Theology : His
 ut me pa- Notion of the Deity as the universal Soul of
 rem Deo the Universe, is but a poor Smatterer in Theology : His
 faciat. Notion of the Deity as the universal Soul of
 Idem. Ep. the Universe, is but a poor Smatterer in Theology : His
 49. Notion of the Deity as the universal Soul of
 Deus mens the Universe, is but a poor Smatterer in Theology : His
 universi, Notion of the Deity as the universal Soul of
 quod vides totum, & quod non vides. Id, Proëm. Qu. Nat.*

the World, is very rude and inaccurate; yet he has left us one very rational Remark, that 'tis no less injurious to God, to deny or disbelieve Him, than to conceive of Him unworthily, and in a different Manner than we ought. Whatever was compos'd on the Subject of Metaphysics, by the later *Platonists*, under the *Roman Emperors*, is but of a weak and incorrect Character. Nor are the *Greek Fathers* very exact in their Discourses of Angels and Spirits, by Reason of the false Idea's which many of them brought out of *Plato's School*. Yet under the *Christian Institution*, the Being of God, the Immortality and separate State of the Soul, the Existence of good and evil Angels, together with the other most important and essential Truths of Religion, have been so fully reveal'd, and placed in so clear a Light, that Men cannot entertain a Doubt concerning them, without the greatest Impiety. *Pomponatius*, about the Beginning of the last Century, compos'd a Tract of the Immortality of the Soul with so loose an Air, as deservedly brought on him the Censures of the Church. *Agrippa's* Discourse of God, of Religion and of Intelligences, in his third Book Of *Occult Philosophy*, is all Madness and Enthusiasm. *Ramus*, in shewing an utter Contempt of metaphysical Doctrine, at the same time betrays the Weakness of his Judgment. He was for cutting off the Science of Metaphysics from the Body of Philosophy, and engrafting the liberal Arts in its Room. But amidst that strange Cloud of Writings, form'd from the Dust of the Schools in these later Ages, no Composition has given Proofs of so deep a Penetration, and so vast a Capacity, as *Suarez's Metaphysics*. This Work, which comprizes all the Subtilty, and all the Strength

*Quid interest utrum re-
ges Deum
an infames?*

Idem Ep.

*Bulla cum
diebus no-
stris, dat.
An. 1513.*

Strength, of scholastick Learning, is one of the most admirable Products of modern Wit. Nor can it be too earnestly recommended to young Students in Divinity, who very often, by the false Taste of a new and affected Method, prefer historical Narrations to solid Arguments; finding it easier to shew a great Memory, than a sound Judgment. We have had a whole Tribe of Commentators that have written profoundly on the Metaphysics of *Aristotle*; among whom *Fonseca* a Portuguese Jesuit, is particularly eminent.

Sir *Kenelm Digby*, in his Treatise of the Immortality of the Soul, is too dark and abstracted. *Descartes* has gain'd a Credit by his metaphysical Meditations; as having gone farther into his Subject than the Generality of Authors. In his first Meditation he teaches us the Art of Doubting, as a necessary Preparative to Knowledge. In his second he proves, that Thought is more known to us than Body. His third is a Demonstration of the Existence of God. His fourth contains the Method of discerning between Truth and Falshood. His fifth, treats of the Essence of material Things; his sixth explains their Existence. The Conclusion of the whole asserts the real Distinctions between Body and Thought, in order to the establishing this Author's great Principle, *Cogito; ergo sum.* We may add, his Replies to the Objections of *Gassendus*, which are written with the same Force as his other Pieces. Dr. *Willis* has discours'd very judiciously of separate Forms. We have had of late, but few Works in this Kind; Mens Heads being rather taken up with physical than metaphysical Speculations. It is much to be wish'd that the latter were diligently pur-

sued,

sued, and applied to all the Subjects that are capable of bearing them. But we ought by no means, to approve of the Design and Notion of some contemplative Men, who would introduce too great a Mixture of Metaphysicks, into the Subjects of Religion: whereas these, having at once the greatest Simplicity, and the greatest reality, should be treated of with the least Abstraction, and the most familiar Plainness of Method.

IV.

This Science, howsoever it may seem to have been labour'd and discuss'd by the several Treatises but now mention'd, is yet capable of being farther improv'd by a diligent Reflection on the Principle and Reasonings of *Aristotle's* Book of Metaphysicks; it being impossible to fix any Bounds to our Ideas. But these Improvements will require a very peculiar Genius and Character. For as the Science of Metaphysicks exceeds all others in Reasoning, and in Reflecting upon its Reasonings, so it has many Obstacles in its Way which cannot easily be got over. The first of these is, that it proceeds in unfrequented, and almost unknown Paths, containing very few Doctrines of allow'd and establish'd Certainty, few Principles in which Men are universally agreed, scarce any just Definition, any exact and compleat Division; and consequently, it administers very large Matter to Doubts and Disputes. The second Obstacle, is the natural Timidity of Man's Understanding, which looks on Metaphysicks, thus abstracted from Sense and Matter as an Exercise above its Strength; in which Respect, it shews a Fear and Diffidence, like that of a Traveller in a strange Road. The third

third Obstacle, is that vast Multitude of rude and barbarous Terms, of obscure and perplex'd Definitions, of dry and barren Conceptions and Reasonings, with which the Schools have embarrass'd this Science, and thereby rendred it far less agreeable and entertaining than others. The Fourth is, that endless Fund of petty Cavils, and vainly intricate Questions, more fit to cumber than to instruct the Mind. The last Obstacle to this Science, is the very particular Capacity, and uncommon Genius that it requires. For either too profound, or too superficial Wits, are alike indispos'd for its Enquiries. By too great a Profoundness of Meditation, Men are subject to fall into a black and melancholick Philosophy; which was the Case of *Cornelius Agrippa*. On the other Hand, too frivolous and superficial a Vivacity of Parts is wont to evaporate, and spend it self, in vain Imaginations: Thus it happen'd to *Cardan*, that fantastical and visionary Philosopher, and thus it often happens to Men that have more Sprightliness of Fancy, than Strength and Solidity of Judgment, Dr. *Moore*, in his late Treatise of Metaphysicks, has invalidated all the new Reasonings made use of by *Descartes*. to prove the Existence of God, and consequently has ruin'd a great Part of his metaphysical Speculations. But what is still more severe, he will scarce allow *Descartes* to have any Sense of Religion; but maintains that his Physicks are as loose and libertine as those of Mr. *Hobbes*. The *Cartesians*, who are very nice as to the Credit and Honour of their Philosophy, have Occasion to shew their Zeal against this Author, by justifying their Doctrine, and vindicating the Reputation of their Master. Many Reflections

fections might be added, but that the Ideas of this Science are so peculiarly remote and obscure. We may conclude our Discourse with taking a View of the Use of Philosophy in regard to Religion, which ought to be the general Application, and final Result of the whole: It being so truly observ'd, that he who has too much of the Philosopher, has often too little of the *Christian*.

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REFLECTIONS

UPON THE

Use of Philosophy

IN

RELIGION.

I.

THE first Instrument that Religion makes Use of in Establishing its Laws and Maxims, is Reason; and Reason cannot be well set to work but by Philosophy, which supplies it with Principles, and reduces it to Method and Order. It is therefore of the highest Importance that our Philosophy be sound and pure, so as to be able to imprint a just Character on our Understanding; and to lead us safely in a Path, from which if we stray, we are lost beyond Recovery. In this respect, as *Lactantius* observes, Philosophy is of great Advantage to a Man, if his Mind be first season'd with Religion. But 'tis too easie to pervert this excellent Help, by the ill Use that we make of it, if we suffer our selves to be misguided by Passion, Interest, or Prejudice. On which account it is remark'd by *Callicles*, in *Plato*, that Religion is always in Danger of being misapplied by Philosophy. So that this Affair will

*Philosophia viro
prodest
plurimum,
si religione
imbutus sit
animus.*

l. IV. c. I.

re-

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require all the Diligence and Caution that we are capable of exercising. Faith is a holy and heavenly Unction which cannot remain incorrupt, in a Mind already tainted with false Doctrine. And as a Liquor will soon be spoilt if put into an unclean Vessel, so nothing has so great a force in altering the Purity of Religion, as the Impurity of those Notions, that are imbib'd before its Reception. Not that 'tis necessary to be Philosophers, in order to our being Christians, or that the Wisdom of the World is to be the Rule and Standard of heavenly Wisdom: But when human Reason has once submitted to divine Faith, Faith, notwithstanding the Privilege of its Divinity, is pleas'd to use the Service of human Reason, that, by this Means, Reason it self may be brought more fully under Subjection to the Obedience of Faith. And therefore Faith it self cannot be entirely pure and uncorrupted, unless Philosophy, which is the Instrument of Faith, be alike free from Impurity and Corruption. It was with this View that S. Paul admonish'd the First Christians, *Beware lest any Man spoil you, through Philosophy and vain Deceit, after the Tradition of Men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after Christ.* The World was then so much infected with the numerous and clashing Opinions of Philosophers, that a Christian was obliged to use all his Care and Circumspection in obviating the Danger. It is a Remark of Tertullian, that the great Source of the first Heresies was the Commerce which the Authors of them maintain'd with the Errors of Philosophy. It was Philosophy misunderstood, that introduced the Egyptians to worship the Sun and the

Notata sunt commercia hereticorum cum philosophis. De Præf. Philofoi.

phi patriarchæ, ut ita dicam, hereticorum. De Anim. l. 3.

*Aegyptios
ferè pri-
mos omni-
um, cum
oculos in
cælum
sustulif-
sent, mo-
dum &
ordinem
corporum
cælestium
admiratos,
solem &
lunam De-
os putasse;
eos vene-
rantes
dum curi-
osius intu-
entur. La-
t. IV.
1.
Epicuri
Philoso-
phiam &
cynicorum
indifferen-
tiam amu-
lantes.
Irenæus.
Epiphan.
adv. Her.
Hieron.
adv. Pe-
lag. Pos-
sevin.
Biblioth.
XIII. 23.
In Epist.*

Stars, says St. *Austin*. The *Valentinians*, against whom St. *Irenæus* chiefly directs his Work, sprung from the School of *Diogenes* and *Epicurus*, the *Gnosticks* from that of *Plato*, and the *Manichees* from that of *Pythagoras*. *Marcion* turn'd Heretick, upon the Doctrine of *Zeno*; and *Manes* borrow'd his Principles from a *Saraconical* Philosopher, mention'd by *Epiphanius*. St. *Jerom* assures us that 'twas the moral Philosophy of the *Stoicks* which seduced the *Pelagians* into Error. And this ill Effect of the seeming Dependance of Religion upon Philosophy, which was complain'd of in the ancient Church, has been too frequent in the Modern. *Posssevinus* says, 'tis incredible, how many Libertines and Hereticks have been made in *Europe*, by the reading of *Averroes*. *Alphonfus*, King of *Castile*, arriv'd at that horrible Degree of Impiety, as to censure the Works of God, in Criticising upon those of Nature, only by his Acquaintance with the *Arabian* Philosophers, and by the Pleasure he took in the Extravagance of a *Spanish Jew*, who first found out the Trepidation of the Firmament. *Agrippa* debauch'd his Understanding by reading *Porphyry*, *Proclus* and *Plessus*; that is, by the *Platonick* Philosophy, as he himself has confess'd. *Servetus* of *Spain*, and *Socinus* of *Italy*, grounded their impious Innovations in Religion, upon philosophical Notions. And 'tis said, that the great Reason, why *Descartes's* Philosophy met at first with so kind a Reception in *Denmark* and *Sueden* was, because it appear'd favourable to the Opinions of *Calvin*, which chiefly prevail'd in those Kingdoms. For the Principles of this new Philosophy seem to insinuate, that the Creature, in its freest Actions, moves only by the Impulse of the Creator; that it is God only that wills in the Will of Man; and that the My-
stery

stery of the Eucharist, in many Things, implies a Contradiction. In a word, nothing tends so much to the Corruption of the Heart, as the Corruption of the Understanding; and nothing is so dangerous to the Interests of Religion, as the false Reasonings of vain Philosophy. Men are not rendred the Disciples of Truth by the School and Doctrine of Lies; nor was it by the Inconstancy and Levity of human Opinions that the Apostles became the Pillars of the Faith. And this Consideration engaged the Fathers of the *Lateran* Council, as well as those of the Council of *Vienn*, strictly to forbid the Professors of Philosophy to teach any Doctrine, prejudicial to the Christian Belief.

Possevin.
Biblioth.
XIII. 10.

II.

As therefore, it highly concerns every Christian, not to give himself up indifferently to all the Schemes of Philosophy, so it requires a great Degree of Prudence to make a safe Choice, among so many contrary Opinions, that have pass'd current so many Ages. For what Light or Certainty, can we expect, among so many Clouds, that for the most part, overspread and disguise the Face of Truth? To which we may add the Obscurity of natural Things, the Weakness of human Understanding, the fallacious Judgment of the Senses, together with Opinion and Passion, which are perpetual Obstacles to natural Evidence and Conviction, as well as those audacious and wild Conjectures to which philosophical Curiosity is expos'd, and which serve rather for Ostentation, and Pride of Science, than for the Conduct of the Mind, or the Edification of the Manners. And hence appears the great Vanity, or rather mere Nullity of human Wisdom, the utmost Light of which is only sufficient to

*Ipsa veri-
tatis oc-
cultatio,
aut humi-
lilitatis ex-
ercitium
est, aut
elationis
attritio.
Lib. de
Civ. Dei.*

*Hom. vii.
in c. 2.
ad Rom.*

*Habentem
formam
scientia
& verita-
tis in lege.
Rom. II.*

lead us astray. For as St. *Austin* observes, God has concealed Truth from Man, as well to punish his Guilt, as to inform Him of his Misery. And therefore, if we would not be mistaken, we must begin with the Study of what we ought to believe, before we presume to refine upon it by the Speculations of Reason. If we would regulate the Use of our Reason, we must first learn to establish the Use of Faith; we must be Christians before we pretend to be Philosophers, we must make our Religion our chief Philosophy, and our highest Wisdom. Philosophy may instruct us in the Art of Reasoning, but it is Christianity alone that can teach us heartily to submit to the Evidence of eternal Reason and Truth. Let us study the Law of God, which, as St. *Chrysostom* says, is the Rule of Truth and Knowledge, if we would find out what Method of Reasoning is most agreeable to it. Let us apply our selves to the Doctrine of the Gospel, which the Pride of Pagan Philosophers could not comprehend, and our Reason will then stand on a solid and invincible Basis: For indeed 'tis Faith alone, that is capable of setting Bounds to the Exorbitancy of Man's Spirit, of fixing the Inconstancy of his Reason. Let us be careful, not to expose our selves to the Uncertainty of vain Reasonings, which may carry us so far beyond the Limits of Truth and Duty. Happy the Man, who in this Ocean of Doubts, and fluctuating Opinions about Religion, has chosen the good Part of Building entirely upon the immoveable Foundation of the Word of God!

III.

Religion then, is the first Principle, by which human Wisdom ought to frame and govern it self. Insomuch that all the various Methods

Methods of Philosophy, ancient or modern, all the new Systems of Physicks, and new Maxims of Morality, may be good, if they be no way repugnant to Religion. The Gospel ought certainly to be the great Standard of our Opinions: And whatsoever is not conformable to this Rule, leads to Error and Disorder. The Doctrine of *Plato* or *Aristotle*, of *Gassendus* or *Descartes*, is to be valued no farther than as it recognizes the Truths of Religion, which ought to be the first and chief Philosophy. Let us be content to part with the Rest of the many Systems. All other Science is no better than Illusion, and all the other Lights but wandring Flames, more apt to amuse our Curiosity; than to satisfy our Understanding. To speak properly we know Things but as in a Dream, and in reality are ignorant of all Things. And this Ignorance would be the Object of our Pity, were it not conceal'd from us by our Pride. The most frivolous Question in the World has divided all the great Genius's of Antiquity, and after more than three thousand Years Dispute is still in a manner undetermin'd. *Thales* and his followers down to *Plato*, denied a *Vacuum*, as *Plutarch* informs us: Most of those that came after, to reckon from *Democritus* and *Epicurus*, to the late Restorers of atomical Philosophy, have vigorously asserted it, and the Point is still under a warm Debate. That Degree of Certainty which the *Academicks* sought for through such a Multitude of Reasonings, serv'd only to betray them into a general Uncertainty. In one Word, all Knowledge, merely human, is weak and wavering; and *Truth*, as well as *Grace*, came only by *Jesus Christ*. It is Faith that can teach us that divine Philosophy, which the *Princes of this* 2. Cor. 6. *World never knew*. He that will but open his

his Eyes to this pure and glorious Light, cannot fail of immediate Illumination. It was not by the Force of Syllogisms and Arguments, that this heavenly Philosophy gain'd Audience and Reception among Men; it was by the Simplicity of its Doctrines, and of its Teachers. The *Greeks* and *Romans* submitted all their State, and all their Pride of Spirit, to the meek and humble Precepts of the Gospel; the Power of which was so great and surprizing, as to render its first Disciples its chief Votaries, and highest Adorers. It is Faith then that ought to make all the Wit, and all the Knowledge of Man; and he who in Opposition to this Guidance follows his own benighted Faculties, is sure to be lost.

IV.

When Faith has once convinc'd a Man of the Falseness of those Lights that glitter'd in Pagan Philosophy, it then teaches him to forbear reasoning upon such Things as God has not subjected to his Decision; it informs him how much better it is, not to know that which God has remov'd from our Comprehension, and with humble Ignorance to adore those Mysteries which he has not been pleas'd fully to open to us, than to pretend to fathom this great Abyss of Light, by the Rashness of our Conjectures, and the imperfect Views of our Reason. To this divine Ray of Faith the Christian, with Delight and Pleasure, sacrifices all that vain Curiosity which would lead him presumptuously to examine the Works of God, in those of Nature, and therefore stops up all the Views of that aspiring Reason which would tempt him to revolt against his Maker. By the Guidance of this heavenly Light, the Christian is instructed, that in religious Matters, Submission is far preferable to Argumentation, that Poverty of Spirit

it is of more Advantage to a true Believer, than the utmost Reach, and deepest Penetration of Judgment; and that Simplicity of Faith is vastly more worth than all the Splendor of Science: Because, indeed, the Works of God, which bear the noblest Character of his Power and Greatness, are those which least fall under our Discovery; and therefore nothing can be more just, than to humble our Reason, and to subject it to the Rule of eternal Reason; especially, since there's no Science whatsoever, that do's not require a previous Submission, in order to the Establishment of its first Principles. But is it reasonable, that we should allow a Sort of Tyranny to be exercis'd over our Mind and Opinion, in Matters indifferent, and that we should, at the same Time, challenge an absolute Freedom as to the Subjects of Religion! *Descartes* tells us very incomprehensible Things, and such as court us with no manner of Interest or Advantage, and we believe him upon his Word: God Almighty propounds to us Mysteries that are every Way consistent and credible, and are accompanied with the Promise of eternal Life, and shall we refuse to believe him?

V. After that Reason has been taught to keep its proper Place, and to submit to Revelation, Philosophy, which is its Rule and Guide, may assist it in uttering its Conceptions. This is the first Use of Philosophy in Religion. And by this means it comes to pass, that Religion, in explaining it self by the Decisions of Councils and Fathers, and the Mouth of Doctors and Divines, has been accusom'd to make Use of the *Aristotelian* Method; because these Councils and Fathers, these Doctors and Divines, have follow'd the same Method; *Anatolius*, Bishop of *Laodicea*, *S. Jerom*, *S. Austin*, *Theodore*t, *Didimus*

of

of *Alexandria*, *Boethius*, *S. John Damascen*, first introduc'd the Philosophy of *Aristotle* into the Service of the Christian World, which was continu'd by the chief Fathers and Divines in the succeeding Ages of the Church. Among whom *Aquinas* signaliz'd himself beyond all Comparison. For this great Doctor, the most accurate of the Schoolmen, found so much true Solidity in *Aristotle's* Way of Reasoning, that he thought the most holy Mysteries of our Religion would not be better express'd or defended, than in the Terms, and upon the Maxims of this Philosophy. Not that *Aquinas*, or his Successors in the Schools, had any the least Design to build and suspend the Truth of Christianity upon that of the *Peripatetick* Philosophy, as some would suggest; but they thought this Doctrine, if rightly applied, might serve indirectly to the establishing the Principles of Faith, after the Use of it had been confirm'd and regulated by the Experience of so many Ages. And tho' our Religion is not founded upon human Reasonings, but purely upon the Simplicity of christian Belief, which is even opposite to the Weakness and Corruption of Man's Understanding; yet 'tis lawful to inforce our Faith with all the auxiliary Strength of rational Arguments, when it has once asserted its Superiority over Reason. Thus God himself whose Prerogative it is to bring Light out of Darkness, speaks to us by the Voice of Men, an Instrument best proportion'd to the Weakness of our Capacity, yet such as do's not impair the Dignity of Him who is pleas'd to use it. The lowest and meanest of Creatures, are, as it were, so many Mouths, publishing the Holiness and Glory of the Creator; the most stupid and dumb Things in Nature do some way or other instruct

us in the Knowledge of Nature; and shall the Reasons, the Terms and Expressions of *Aristotle*, be voted useless in religious Subjects, because they are borrow'd from a Pagan Writer? Have we good Cause to be afraid of asserting our sacred Mysteries in these Forms, and with these Distinctions, when *Aquinas*, so exact a Follower of the Fathers and Councils, has scarce made Use of any others? Let us continue the Method which this great and good Man has authoriz'd by his Example, and in which he has been imitated by all the eminent Divines since his Days. And whatsoever Overtures may be made, let us never give the Enemies of the Church that Satisfaction, as to see her change her Language at the Pleasure of certain upstart and modish Philosophers.

VI.

Nor may Philosophy be only serviceable to Religion, in supplying it with Terms and Expressions, but may likewise assist it with a Method of Reasoning. For tho' the Reason of a Christian ought to submit to his Faith, yet it should be able to give an Account of its Submission by Instructing those that are ignorant of his Faith, and refuting those that oppose it. And *Aristotle's* Method being the most solid of all that have ever been invented, (as was before observ'd in the *Reflections upon Logick*) *Aquinas* chose to make Use of this, in preference to all others, as the most proper for the Subversion of Error, and the Establishment of the Truth. It is this excellent Method that has rendred our Religion so impregnable to all the Innovators of these latter Times, who not being able to resist its Force, have attempted to invalidate its Authority, by declaiming against the Schoolmen, and much more against *Aristotle*, whose Method had been

Nichol. been thus adopted by the Schools. The *Ana-*
 Blesdik. *baptists*, who swarm'd in the northern Parts, be-
 in Histor. gan to decry the Use of all Philosophy in gene-
 David. ral, and alledg'd the Words of *S. Paul* to the *Co-*
 Georg. *lossians*, for the Prohibition of it in all their Se-
 minaries. For nothing is indeed so proper, ei-
 ther for the Supporting of Truth, or for the De-
 tection of those false Reasonings under which
 Error is wont to disguise it self, as this *Ari-*
stotelian Method. And therefore, the University
 of *Paris*, which has ever appear'd so zealous in
 the Defence of the Faith, in the Year MDCXI
 solemnly reviv'd and reinforc'd that ancient
 Rule, which oblig'd the Professors, strictly to
 teach *Aristotle's* Philosophy, and to observe the
 most useful Manner of teaching it. And what
 can be said more for the Glory of *Aristotle's*
 Doctrine, than that it has been as constantly ap-
 prov'd and recommended by the Fathers and
 orthodox Professors, who were best acquainted
 with it, as it has been incessantly reviled and
 condemn'd by Hereticks, and by all the Ene-
 mies of Religion?

VII.

Besides those Terms, and that Method of
 reasoning which Religion may derive from
 Philosophy, as the Rule of its Thoughts, and
 the Organ of its Words, it may from the same
 Store be furnish'd with Arguments and Motives
 to arm its Defenders, and disarm its Opposers.
 It was Philosophy that first adventur'd to open
 the great Book of the Universe to the Eyes of
 the Learned and of the Ignorant, and by the
 Beauty of the Creatures to instruct all the Na-
 tions of the Earth in the Power and Majesty of
 the Creator. It was Philosophy that by its ex-
 cellent Lessons rais'd up the Mind of Man from
 the Contemplation of these Wonders, to the
 Knowledge

Knowledge of their great Origin and Principle, by displaying the Cause of so many admirable Effects. It was Philosophy that rendered Man capable of hearing that Voice of the Heavens and the Stars, which publishes the Greatness of God, and declares his Glory. It was by the wonderful Succession of Day and Night, by the uniform and constant Return of Seasons, by the Order and Harmony of the Elements, and of all the Parts which compose the general System, that this Science of Nature, proclaim'd, as by Sound of Trumpet, the Divinity of the Almighty Author, while it pointed out the Traces and Footsteps of his perfect Work. It was this that engaged *Pythagoras, Hippocrates, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle*, the most solid Genius's of all Antiquity, to acknowledge the Unity of the Divine Nature, of which they were convinc'd by one visible Argument, the Contemplation of the great Theater of the World. But the same Reflection which ascertain'd these great Men of so important a Truth, serv'd only to baffle and confound the Pride of certain minute Philosophers, who, as *St. Paul* speaks, *became vain in their Imagination, and their foolish Heart was darkned, professing themselves to be Wise, they became Fools*; in as much as they ascrib'd to the Creature the Honour and Worship which was only due to the Creator, by the perverted Use of their Reason and Philosophy, and by studying Nature without a just Regard to its Author. This was the Case of *Epicurus*, who pretended, that the only Service of natural Knowledge was to allay those Fears that arose in the Mind from religious Impressions. On the contrary, *Plato* turn'd all his Science of Nature into a Demonstration of the Existence of God, and maintain'd

Celi enarrant gloriam Dei.
Ps. XIX.

Rom. 1.

Appetitor artis, deservitor artificis, completitur speciem, cujus non miratur autorem.

Euch. Ep.
tain'd ad Val.

*Magnis
doceo de
rebus, &
artis Re-
ligionum
animum
nodis ex-
olvere per-
go.*

Lucr. l. 4.

tain'd that the Maker of all Things was to be known by the visible World, as an Artificer by the Product of his Art. And *Aristotle* in his Treatise of Motion, summs up almost the whole Force of his Reasonings, in that excellent Demonstration of a First Mover, which *Avicenna* acknowledg'd to be one of the clearest and most evident, in all the natural Doctrine of this Philosopher. So true it is, that the Difficulties which Men pretend in believing the Proposals of Religion, are wholly owing to the Weakness and Impotency of their Mind. For who-soever is Master of true and solid Reason, will esteem it one great Use of his Reason, humbly to resign and submit it in Things that necessarily demand such a Submission.

VIII.

These are the chief Parts that Philosophy may be capable of performing in the Service of Religion. It may likewise add Weight and Authority to those Testimonies upon which Religion establishes its Maxims, may assist in pulling off the various Masks and false Appearances of Error, may restrain the immoderate Freedom which the Wise of this World are apt to take, in too curiously searching Things above their Capacity; may inure and accustom Reason familiarly to submit to the most incomprehensible Things, having once given it a just Veneration for the Authority of God, by producing some of those noble Marks of the Power of the Gospel, in virtue of which a few plain Fishermen triumph'd over the Wisdom of *Athens* and *Rome*, and by their Patience and Humility made themselves the Masters of the World. *Origen*, who, as *Eusebius* informs us, thought himself obliged to justify his Application to the heathen Sages, which had been cen-

*Hist. l. 6.
c. 19.
Origen
Philocal.
13.*

sur

sur'd as dishonourable to his Christian Profession, has made this Use of Philosophy, and has taught us to make the same, by observing, that a Christian should so far only be a Philosopher, as thereby to become a more hearty and invincible Believer; and therefore, that Philosophy is but the Instrument or the Handmaid of Religion. And this he explains by that wise Reflection which *Clemens of Alexandria* had made before him, that God himself had been pleas'd to give a Specimen of the same Conduct, in commissioning his People the *Israelites*, to convert the Riches and Spoils of *Egypt*, to the adorning of his Religion and Worship. This learned Father recommends nothing so much to Christian Philosophers, as the Reading of the Holy Scriptures, and the Reading them with an Attention worthy of the divine Truths which they contain, such as may lead them to the Knowledge of these heavenly Mysteries by Simplicity of Heart, and Humility of Spirit. And instead of disputing about Religion, as we do about indifferent Subjects in the Schools, he would have us with Awe, Reverence, and Submission, believe and adore its unsearchable Truths. It was thus, as *St. Jerom* assures us, Catalog. that this learned Man imploy'd the Discoveries Scrip. Ec. of profane Sciences, and secular Philosophy in bringing Disciples to *Christ*, and raising Men to the sublime Doctrines of Christian Faith.

IX.

These Terms, this Method, and these Reasonings, with which Religion is supplied from Philosophy, would still be insufficient for its Use, if it did not farther derive from the same

*Miseria
certè est
hominis, si
non est
malitia
Sapientis.*

Aug. de C. D. l. 19. c. 1.

Nulla homini causa est Philosophandi, nisi ut beatus sit. Aug. ibid.

Assistance

Assistance an Exactness of Perception and Judgment, such as prepares the Mind to admit the Light of Faith, by the Light of natural Sense, which is the first Foundation of all the Workings of the Soul. For Man is unhappily subject to frequent Mistakes, and this Unhappiness arises at least from the Infirmary and Corruption of his Heart, if not likewise from the Pride and Presumption of his Understanding. And since learned Men and Philosophers are still more expos'd to this common Danger, than the Simple and Ignorant, the same pious Father, who was but now mention'd, concludes, That the only true Philosophy must consist in the Reflection upon Eternity. Whence *Aquinas* begins his Defence of Religion against the *Gentiles*, with this Question, What is the Obligation of a wise Man? or, What is the chief Duty of a Philosopher? And he asserts it to be the Enquiry after that Supreme Truth, which is the Source and Origin of all other Truths, confirming his Assertion by the Testimony of *Aristotle*. And this was the great Study of the first Christian Philosophers; they applied their secular Attainments, not only to the Search of religious and heavenly Truth, but likewise to the Instruction of the Ignorant, and the Conviction of Gain-sayers. Thus *St. Justin Martyr*, thus his Scholar *Tatian*, thus *Athenagoras*, and *Clemens Alexandrinus*, the first Philosophers of our holy Profession, dedicated their Philosophy to the Service and Support of their Faith, by refuting the Calumnies of the Pagan Teachers, and wiping out those false Ideas with which they had possess'd the Multitude. It was thus *Tertullian* express'd his Zeal, in his admirable Apology, in which, among other Reasons, inspir'd by so just a Cause, one that he principally

Quod sit
Officium
Sapientis?
quærere
& demon-
strare ve-
ritatem
quæ prima
veritas est.
Tho. l. 1.
C. 1. Cent.
Gent.
Prima Phi-
losophia
est scientia
ejus veri-
tatis, quæ
est origo
omnis ve-
ritatis. I-
dem ib. ex
Arist. Me-
taphys.

ly insists upon the Life of *Christians*, that Life, so pure, so holy, so rais'd above Sense; that disinterested Fidelity, that noble Charity which animated all their Actions, and engaged them to pray for the most barbarous of their Persecutors: In a word, he alledg'd the Innocence of their Practice, as the most lively Testimony to the Holiness of that Religion which they preach'd; and thus he endeavour'd to stop the Mouth of Error and Imposture. *Origen*, in his Discourse against *Celsus*, takes another Method. He proves the Truth of Christianity, by the Divinity of our Lord, observing, that no Exception can be made against *Jesus Christ*, which will not lie against *Moses*; for *Christ* cannot be, as he certainly is, the End and Accomplishment of the *Law*, without being at the same Time, the strongest Proof and Confirmation of the Authority of the Legislator; and unless we suppose the Truth of his Mission, we must give up the *Law* and the Prophets, as a continued Series of Falshood. *S. Hippolitus* still urges another Sort of Reasoning. 'You are unable to conceive (*says he to the Infidels*) the Formation of your own Nature; and would you presume to comprehend the eternal Generation of the Son of God?' Not vain Curiosity, but humble Submission, is the Badge of true Believers. Faith do's not disclose its Light, but to those who know how to put a Veil upon their Reason; and how ever obscure it may seem, yet it ought to be adored by those of whom it cannot be comprehended. Among the Arguments made Use of by *Minutius Felix*, this seems to be of peculiar Strength; forasmuch as the Reasonings of an Unbeliever can only lead him into Doubt and Uncertainty, he ought to act like a Traveller, that finds him-

self engag'd among several intricate Ways, and knows not which is the right; for here the Traveller, if he be wise, will stand still, not being able either to follow them all, or to prefer any one to the rest. Now this is what the Libertines never practise, who, though they ground their whole Conduct upon Uncertainty, yet cease not to follow their own Wandrings and Extravagance, wanting the Courage and Resolution to do that, in the only important Affair, which the weakest among Men are wont to do in the ordinary Business of Life, and that is, never to act upon Doubt, but to seek for Assurance in every Step they take. The Falseness of Idols, and ridiculous Vanity of Pagan Worship, is the Argument upon which S. Cyprian, Arnobius, Lactantius (his Scholar,) Eusebius of Cesarea, and Cyril of Alexandria, establish'd the Truth of our Religion; Theodoret's Treatise of Providence, and S. Austin's Books *de Civitate Dei*, are most wise and solid Apologies for the Christian Faith, of profound Learning and admirable Eloquence. Thus almost all the ancient Fathers made Use of their Philosophy and human Knowledge, to support (each in his Way,) the Cause of Religion, which was attack'd by all the Violence of secular Powers, by all the Science of pagan Philosophers, and by all the Subtilty of malicious Hereticks.

But as the first Christians were rather employ'd in defending their Faith against its Adversaries, and, by a pure and holy Life, preparing themselves as it were, for daily Martyrdom, than in displaying those awful Mysteries which are hidden under the sacred Veil of the Scriptures; so the greatest Part of the more early Apologists contented themselves with vindicating

dicating our Religion from the Aspersions cast upon it; not attempting to search its Truths to the Bottom, lest they should profane these Holy Things by laying them open to the View of Unbelievers. It was necessary, in the Birth and Infancy of the Church, to conceal the new Spirit of our Faith, which the Eyes of the heathen World then overspread with Idolatry, were not able to bear. But since in these latter Days, we are more familiarly acquainted with the Light of the Gospel, it seems now more convenient, to unfold and display the Holiness of these august Mysteries, than under ambiguous Expressions to obscure their Splendor: And this is the Conduct that has been observ'd by the modern Apologists. *Aquinas* made the first Attempt to explain the Grounds of our Religion, in his Work against the *Gentiles*. In the three former Books he shews that our Faith contains nothing but what is agreeable to natural Light: and in the fourth, he demonstrates, that how much soever it exceeds the Powers of our Reason and Understanding, yet it is never repugnant to them. And this Work is one of the best and purest Fountains, from which the perfect Knowledge of our christian Principles may be deriv'd. *Remondus Sebundus* a *Spanish* Divine, has labour'd in the same Field, and seems beholden to *Aquinas* for the Plan and Model of his Undertaking. Yet by endeavouring to bring the most sublime Mysteries of Faith to the Standard of Reason, he has given us rather an human and natural, than a divine and reveal'd Religion. *Savonarola* has collected all that is good and solid in the Fathers upon this great Subject; and he has added an Argument which is new, and properly his own, That unless the Truth of our

In triumph
pho Cru-

Religion be granted, a *Christian* must be the greatest Monster in Nature: He must at once, be eminently wise, and notoriously foolish; wise in his Practice, and a Fool in his Belief; he must have nothing but Integrity in his Heart; his Reason must be widely extravagant, and yet his Will exactly regular: His Mind must be perpetually disorder'd, though with the Advantage of Innocence and Probity, to guide and direct it: In a word, he must be an unaccountable Medley of Truth and Falshood, of Purity and Corruption. Nay, (as this excellent Author proceeds,) upon denying *Jesus Christ* to be the true God, this Contradiction follows, that he must have been at once the most Holy and the most Wicked of Men: There being no Crime so daring, as that of pretended and usurp'd Divinity. But was it possible that so exalted Virtue should be built upon so manifest Injustice? That the proudest and most ambitious of Mankind should be the great Master, and accomplish'd Pattern of Humility? That a Doctrine so pure and holy as the Gospel, should be the Work of an uncommission'd Pretender? That so perfect a System of Morals should be establish'd on so apparent Impiety and Iniquity? The Piece of *Ludovicus Vives* on the Truth of the *Christian* Religion, is but an Abridgement of what the Fathers have said on this Argument, cast into a proper Method. One of his strongest Evidences, is the Accomplishment of that Prophecy in *Hosea*, concerning the *Jews*, which he handles in his third Book, and which *St. Austin* had before touch'd upon in the 18th Chapter of his 28th Book *De Civitate Dei*. Yet *Vives* does not seem to have set this Proof in its full Light. For nothing can really be more convincing to a sober and sound Judgment, than a Prophe-

Dies multos sedebunt filii Israel, sine rege, & sine principe, & sine sacrificio, & sine altari, & sine ephod.
Ose. 3.

cy deliver'd a thousand Years before the Completion, and now literally verified to the Eyes of all the World, for more than sixteen hundred Years. *Marcilius Ficinus's* Work on the same Subject, is chiefly a Demonstration of our Lord's Divinity, by the Prophecies of the Old Testament, by the Miracles of the New, and by the Truth of the christian Doctrine, preach'd by illiterate Men, without Passion or Interest, and such as could neither be themselves deceiv'd, nor could entertain a Design of Imposing upon others. But one of the most accurate Methods in the Defence and Illustration of our Faith, is that of *Melchior Canus*, Bishop of the *Canaries*, founded upon the Tenor of Scriptures, Fathers, Councils, Divines, and all the Force of rational Argument. I forbear to mention those late Apologists that are in the Hands of every Reader. What I have said of others, may be sufficient to give us some Idea of the Use which a Christian Professor ought to make of his Philosophy, after the Example of these great Persons, who applied it wholly to the Establishment and Defence of Religion. For upon mature Consideration, this will appear to be the only Thing that is real and solid in Life. And since all other Possessions, or Attainments are vain and perishable, the only true Wisdom is to meditate upon Eternity; and the best Philosophy is to be a good Man.

*Sapientia
est verita-
tem de
primo
principio
meditari.*

7 DE61

Tho. contra Gent. l. 1. c.

FINIS.

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